DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 371 231 CE 066 764

TITLE	Vocational Training and the Territorial Context.
INSTITUTION	European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training, Berlin (Germany).
REPORT NO	ISSN-0378-5068
PUB DATE	93
NOTE	76p.
AVAILABLE FROM	UNIPUB, 4661-F Assembly Drive, Lanham, MD 20706-4391 (Catalogue No. HX-AA-93-002-EN-C: 6 European Currency Units).
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120)
JOURNAL CIT	Vocational Training; n2 1993
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC04 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Annotated Bibliographies; Cooperative Planning; *Decentralization; Economic Development; Educational Planning; *Educational Policy; Educational Trends; Education Work Relationship; Financial Support; Foreign Countries; *International Cooperation; Postsecondary Education; Regional Cooperation; *Regional Planning; School Business Relationship; School Community Relationship; Secondary Education; Small Businesses; *Vocational Education
IDENTIFIERS	*European Community; *Territoriality

ABSTRACT

This document contains nine articles about vocational training (VT) policy and the impact of decentralization and issues of territory on VT in the European Community (EC) member states. The following articles are included: "Vocational Training and Regional Policies: The Same Challenge..." (Landaburu); "Vocational Training in a Regional Europe: Securing Locations and Profiles from the Perspective of the German Economy" (Feuchthofen); "On-line Service Centres as Permanent Training Centres" (Brusco); "The Territorial Aspect of Vocational Training: The French Case" (Durand-Prinborgne); "Regionalisation Trends in the Netherlands in the Field of Vocational Education and Training: Tensions and Prospects" (Hovels, van der Meijs, van Zeijts); "Decentralisation, Territory, and Vocational Training Policy" (Artiles); "Training, Work Organization and Territorial Effects: The Case of a Motor Vehicle Supplier" (Zygmunt); "Vocational Training and Regions: Changes in Categories of Interpretation and Types of Action" (Capecchi); and "Vocational Training and Regional Development; Brief Retrospective" (Pierret). Also included are the following: an 18-item annotated bibliography of publications about VT and regional development; descriptions of EC activities and international cooperation related to VT and employment; and descriptions of the existing systems of VT in each of the 11 EC member states. (MN)

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ED 371 231

No 2/1993

ISSN 0378-5068

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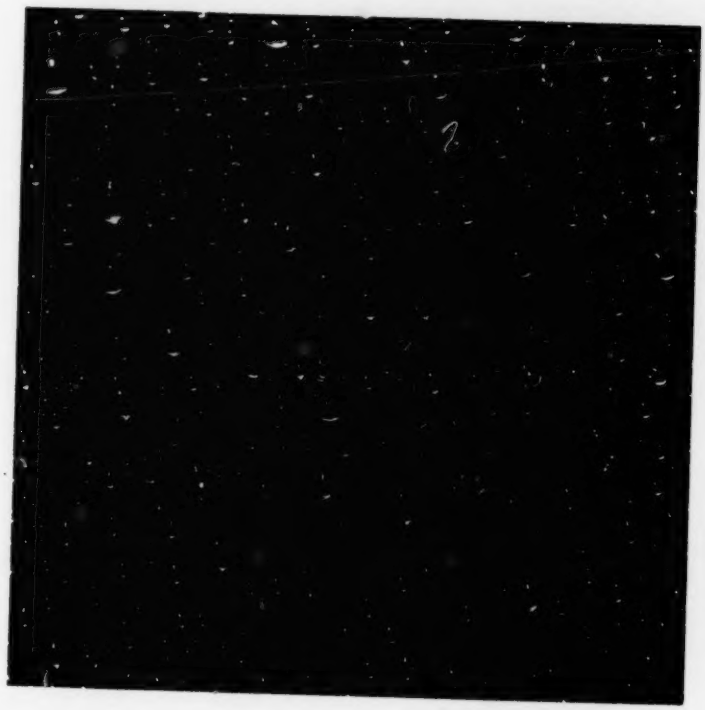

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Vocational Training

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**Regular publication
of the European Centre
for the Development
of Vocational Training**

This publication appears
twice a year in
Spanish, Danish, German,
Greek, English, French, Italian,
Dutch and Portuguese

Published under the responsibility of:
Ernst Piehl, Director
Corrado Politi, Deputy Director
Enrique Retuerto de la Torre,
Deputy Director

Editorial staff:

Content and structure:
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Layout:
Werbeagentur
Zühlke Scholz & Partner GmbH,
Berlin

Technical Production with DTP:
Axel Hunstock, Berlin

The contributions were received on
or before 15.12.1993

The Centre was established by Regulation
No 337/75 of the Council of the European
Communities

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Catalogue number:
HX-AA-93-002-EN-C

Printed in
the Federal Republic of Germany, 1994

No. 2/1993: Vocational training and the territorial context

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Dear Readers,

The need to produce flexibility to permit vocational training to stepwise reduce the potential structural lag in relation to social and economic trends, to respond adequately to increasingly differing needs at various territorial levels and to bring national training policies closer to the labour markets and to changes in job structure and contents at local and regional level has made the spatial concept a key dimension in defining training policies.

If decentralization is not itself a new phenomenon, particularly in the context of certain national configurations, awareness of the need today to focus development on the social, economic and cultural components at regional and local level has prompted Member States to expand the areas of decentralized autonomy in managing vocational training in the form of territorial units based around historical and cultural affinities and economic and social tradition.

In the process of decentralization there emerges a large number of new protagonists, levels and areas where decisions are taken and a fanning out of competence in vocational training. The ability of those involved - local authorities, schools, employers and trade union organizations - to coordinate their action and the existence of an institutional framework adapted to promoting relations between those involved and to increase their competence at various levels are key factors in determining the efficiency of training systems. Constructing tools to assist in decision-making, particularly the generation of information at local and regional level and thus increasing specific knowledge of an area, is essential in order to provide support to those involved. Regional Employment and Training Observatories, set up in a number of European countries, are useful tools in this respect.

The efficiency of a vocational training systems depends fundamentally on the coherence between the national dimension - a regulatory framework with the ability to set standards and fix time scales and to grasp and adapt specific aspects and approve their status - and the autonomy granted at various territorial levels to ensure adapted responses to particular needs. The balance between standardization and customization, subsidiarity between the various levels and the ability of these levels to "listen" to each other is the key to such coherency.

Training policies are anchored in economic, social and cultural policies at local and regional levels. This involves a large number of concepts and structures which have a strong bearing on the coherence of the system and the challenges of training in the long term. This raises questions of "choosing" the laws governing training systems ("school", "economic", etc) and issues relating to managing and organizing the systems, to those involved in the dialogue, the funding mechanisms, assessment criteria and the transferability of certificates and diplomas.

■ What issues are involved in centralizing/decentralizing training?

■ How is competence divided in vocational training in the EU Member States?

Producing a training response to local and regional needs also raises the issue of the relationship between training and employment - a relationship which evidently cannot be characterised by total dependence or independence. The "belief" in the stability of economic and social structures which would permit medium-term forecasting of qualification needs and the belief that regulating internal flow would result in adjustments to the systems have proved Utopian. The idea of the mechanical harmonization of training and employment has shown its limitations, partly on account of the many different ways internal and external labour markets function, the forms of work organization, the content and structure of jobs and the trends in individual training selection. Such a view did not take into consideration the influence that the training mechanisms may have on work and employment.

The simplistic integration of training system, labour market and the company may reduce the individual's ability to relocate on the labour market, may shorten the "life" of qualifications and impede the ability to react at local level at a juncture where the fate of the company and market trends have become increasingly uncertain.

An approach which condemns training to the confines of academic logic may have substantial negative effects in terms of the validity of qualifications on the labour market, all the more so in view of the fact that there is an increasing demand for qualifications which can only be acquired at the workplace.

In several Member States efforts are being made to redefine the role of training and its links to education in order to reposition it in relation to those involved and the social instances such as the local community and the company. Projects linking training to economic and social development are on the increase. Efforts are also being made to encourage alternance between theoretical apprenticeship and apprenticeship through work experience in both initial and continuing training. This may prompt a reallocation of responsibilities among those involved in education and production in the generation of qualifications. Similarly, it may prompt renewal of the way these are related. This also involves developing partnerships between the training system, the centres which promote innovation and the production place, made most evident at a local level.

■ At local level what form do relations take between the training system and the production system for generating qualifications?

■ What impact does this have on the training systems?

The divergence between competences and employment opportunities in different geographical areas within the same country, the existence of "exclusion pockets" in certain regions raises the question of how training can reduce regional disparities and associated exclusion phenomena. This issue touches upon the role of training in regional development and in mobility policies: can it promote the geographical mobility of individuals and, if so, how? Can it help to locate companies in initially unfa-

vourable industrial contexts and, if so, under what conditions?

As part of Community policy to promote regional development, efforts have been made through the structural funds, in particular the Regional Fund and the European Social Fund to reduce regional disparities.

■ What are the main trends in Community policy in this areas?

■ What are the implications of the Maastricht Treaty for Community vocational training policy?

Ernst Piehl
Director

Vocational training and regional policies: the same challenge ....

Clearly, given today's challenges - development of technologies, organization and production systems, globalization of the economy, competition - vocational training requires action on national and Community levels as well as on the sectoral level. For the same reasons, it must be anchored in regional and local realities.

This contribution will limit itself to presenting a general picture of Community regional policies, their recent adjustments where vocational training is concerned, the action taken followed by some conclusions.

In the field of occupational qualifications, as in others, the differences between regions within the Community are considerable. The proportion of young people aged between 15 and 19 at school or undergoing training varies from under 40% in Portugal to more than 85% in Germany, Denmark or the Netherlands. Public expenditure on research and development is 4 - 7 times higher in Germany, France or the United Kingdom than it is in the less developed Member States. Total per capita expenditure in this field is 40 times higher in German firms than in Portuguese or Greek ones.

Eneko Landaburu

Director General of DG XVI, Regional Policy, Commission of the European Communities, Brussels

The advent of the Single European Market brings with it opportunities but also risks for the more disadvantaged regions. It was in order to enable these regions to benefit from the advantages that a decision was taken in 1988 to revise the structural funds. This led to profound changes in regional policies. The goal was to target assistance, to improve programming, to ensure that Community loans would not replace national financial efforts and, a major innovation, to introduce the principle of partnership. Various approaches which have proved their worth between 1989 and 1993 have now been further strengthened. More than ever, the general goal of structural activities is to achieve a greater economic and social balance within the Community. This was confirmed by the Treaty on European Union which stresses in this respect the key role of regional policies whilst at the same time extending Community competencies in the social field.

The framework for intervention

The Community framework for assistance

The vocational training activities co-financed by the structural funds and, more particularly those which are directly linked to Community policies for regional and local development, mainly come under the Community Support Frameworks (CSFs). These agreements are reached on a multi-year basis between national and regional authorities of each Member State of the European Community on the basis of development plans presented initially by the Member States. The CSFs establish priorities in the policies to be conducted, the forms which Community intervention will take (most frequently operational programmes) and the amount available from the Community for the funding of these activities.

To simplify and accelerate the programme and procedures, the regulations for the structural funds which were revised in 1993 envisage the possibility for the Member States to present a single proposal which includes both the development plans and the applications for assistance for the programmes, projects and measures to be implemented. In this case, the Commission can take a single decision which concerns both the CSF and the programmes. The latter need not necessarily be submitted for adoption any longer in a third phase as was the case so far.

The revised rules envisage, moreover, that the development plans of the Member States contain new elements including: a precise description of the current situation in regard to differences and delays as well as the results of activities undertaken in the previous period; the definition of specific objectives, quantified where appropriate within the framework of the strategies pursued; an evaluation of the environment and the impact of the activities proposed in this field according to the principle of "sustainable development" and stipulating the steps taken to involve the competent authorities.

Community aid will be granted, the new regulations indicate, when a prior assessment has outlined the economic and social advantages to be expected in the medium-term in respect of the resources provided.

Once the programmes have been adopted, monitoring committees are set up on which are represented members of the region, the states and the commission. Responsible for the regular monitoring of activities, they also contribute in this way to their sound assessment.

The development objectives

The action of the structural funds is focused on five priority objectives of which three - Objectives 1, 2 and 5b - have a specifically regional character. These five objectives have been defined as follows for the programme period 1994-99:

Objective 1 (regions behind in their development). These are regions in which the per capita GDP is lower than 75% of the Community average, as well as (and this is a new feature) zones in which the GDP is slightly higher than this level and in which there are special reasons for integrating them into this objective. This includes 8 new zones situated in Belgium, France, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom. The 5 new German Länder and East Berlin are also part of this whereas the Abruzzes will only be eligible up to 1996.

Objective 2 (regions seriously affected by industrial decline). This is oriented towards areas which have a level of unemployment and a percentage of industrial employment which is higher than the Community average. West Berlin is eligible up to 1996.

Objective 5b (vulnerable rural areas). This mainly concerns rural areas in which the per capita GDP is low and which meet at least two of the following criteria: high level of agricultural employment, low level of agricultural income, low population density or threatened with decline.

Henceforth, Objectives 2 and 5b include amongst the secondary criteria for eligibility, the impact of restructuring the fishing sector.

As far as Objectives 3, 4 and 5a are concerned, they cover activities which cannot be conducted on a regional level alone; they have to be coordinated with regional development policies and will have a major impact thereon. The new Objective 3 for the period 1994-99: combating long-term unemployment, occupational integration of young people and those threatened with exclusion from the labour market. New Objective 4: adaptation of workers to industrial change and to the development of production systems. Objective 5a: modernization of agricultural structures within the framework of the reform of the common agricultural policy.

During the period 1989-93 activities to combat long-term unemployment (former Objective 3) for the occupational integration of young people (former Objective 4) have been, as far as the regions in Objective 1 are concerned, incorporated into the CSFs (Community Support Frameworks) of the latter. The new regulations still envisage, for the new Objectives 3 and 4, that a distinction be made between the data concerning the regions in Objective 1 (data which will be integrated into the regional development plans and the CSF concerned) and those which have to do with the rest of Community territory.

From the financial angle: out of a total of ECU 141.5 billion for the three structural funds between 1994 and 1999, most of the resources will continue to be channelled into Objective 1 which, for the year 1999, will account for 70%. Objectives 3 and 4, funded by the European Social Fund, will account respectively for 80% and 20% of the earmarked amount.

Structural funds and vocational training

Vocational training continues to be one of the specific fields for intervention by the European Social Fund throughout the Community. The 1993 regulations permit a better adaptation of this field of action to regional necessities including, above all, in the regions in Objective 1, the improvement of education and training systems as well as the training of civil servants to contribute to this development and, in the regions of Objectives 1, 2 and 5b: the training of managers and technicians for research centres. Furthermore, the spectrum of groups to benefit from Objective 3 has been extended and the conditions for eligibility to the measures have been rendered more flexible.

As far as the European Regional Development Fund is concerned, the new regulations enable the extension of ERDF assistance to investment contributing to the structural adjustment of the regions in Objective 1 in respect of education and health and this without having to justify, in advance, the creation of secure jobs. So far ERDF only offered limited support to the funding of some equipment.

Both ERDF and ESF now see their field of intervention extended in respect of research and development for Objectives 1, 2 and 5b. This development is likely to stimulate demand for vocational training on the regional and local levels. The same

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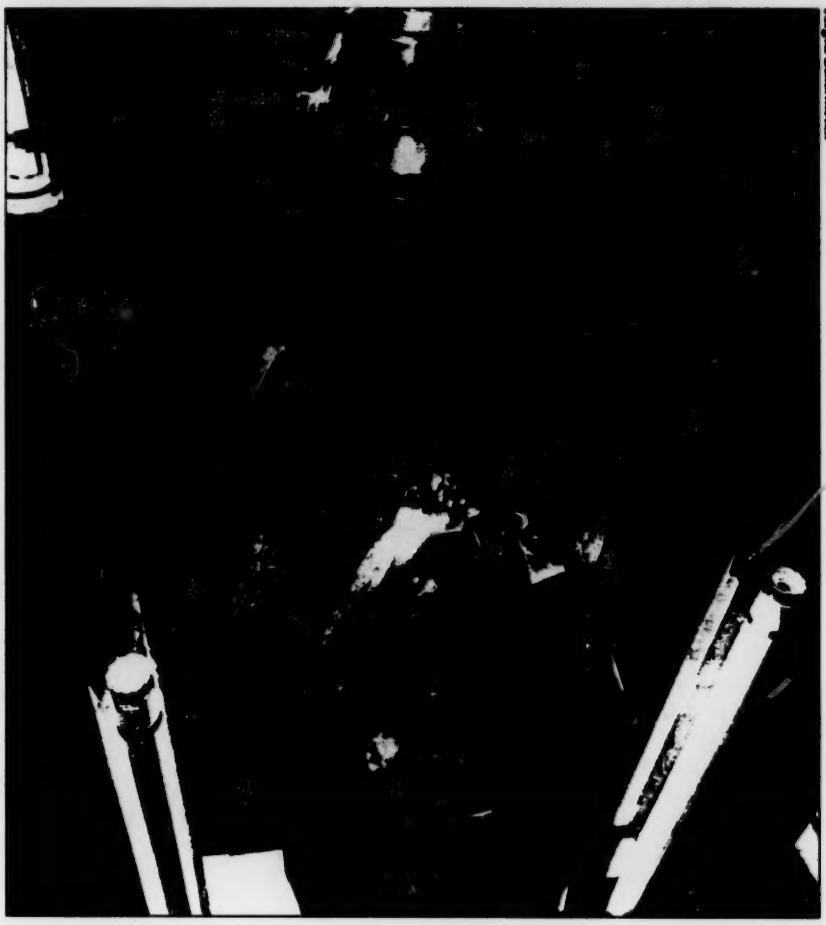
applies to the emphasis placed on activities such as upgrading local products or restoring villages as far as the operations of the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) (section Guidance) is concerned.



Jürgen Bindrim/laif

A review of assistance

.... in the programmes for regional development of CSFs

Several hundred operational programmes (OP), coherent sets of multi-year measures, have been set up within the framework of the objectives for regional development during the period 1989-1993.

Several of these programmes in the most varied areas more or less directly involve vocational training. This may involve the assistance of the European Social Fund to organize training or the support of ERDF or EAGGF to assist for example the regions concerned to secure themselves the training facilities and equipment necessary for their economic development. Furthermore, it may mean support for industrial or craft enterprises, services to small and medium-sized enterprises likely to promote training in corporate spirit or assistance in the transfer of new technologies, particularly informatics, which will lead to new dynamism in training whilst equipping the latter with new tools. A further example is the development in rural areas of green tourism which calls for education on the environment and training for tour operators; etc.

It is not possible to give an exhaustive and balanced geographical presentation of the activities involving or promoting vocational training undertaken thanks to CSFs in Objectives 1, 2 and 5b. Here are just a few:

■ **Objective 1** (involving activities to combat long-term unemployment and the occupational integration of young people). In Ireland several measures for human resources have focused on growth sectors and new skills in management, corporate planning, marketing, etc. The most important include: the development of the Tallaght Regional Technical College in Dublin and the creation of a new training agency for hotel and catering. In Northern Ireland (United Kingdom) the "Business Start" project aims to provide jobs for 1,000 participants in an occupational apprenticeship cycle.

In Italy the multi-regional OP "Research and Development" for the Mezzogiorno has training activities for 500 new research scientists parallel to setting up a number of research centres for transport, the environment, agro-biotechnology and alternative energies. The regional OP for Calabria has supported the setting up of faculties for engineering and architecture at the University of Reggio Calabria and the restructuring of several vocational training centres. In Sardinia two training centres for small and medium-sized enterprises are in the pipeline whilst the construction of five craft pilot centres has been completed.

In Spain some of the activities conducted under the aegis of the European Social Fund for the reorientation of young certificate holders towards new production technologies have achieved a very high technological level. As for ERDF, several major achievements can be documented including a services centre for companies in Seville and the Marine Science and Technology Centre in Puerto Real, in Andalusia. They also draw to a large extent on new technologies. In Valencia a system of assistance for young people setting up small and medium-sized enterprises has been established within the framework of a network of technological institutes. In Portugal the PRODEP programme has been set up to modernize schools. One activity in Corsica (France) aims to improve the qualifications both of salaried staff and of management and heads of companies.

■ **Objective 2**. In the Saar (Germany) activities to restructure the economy of coal mining areas in decline include aid for occupational retraining and the recruitment of workers at the same time as assistance to firms creating new jobs. A university unit guarantees the transfer of technologies between research and industry

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and an institute of the technical university has introduced roughly 100 projects linking technical education with small and medium-sized businesses.

In Piedmont (Italy) an in-depth study on training needs in the tourism industry has made possible the development of à la carte "inter-company" training tailored to local needs. In Spain several university centres have been set up in Barcelona, Tarragon and Gérone (Catalonia), in Getafe and Alcala de Henares (Madrid). In the Twente region in the Netherlands, a business and science park has been set up close to the university and a programme for training in new technologies has been introduced. In Champagne-Ardennes (France) an institute for training for higher technicians has opened and the equipment modernized in 13 technical grammar schools. For French OPs the creation of regional management cells has helped to improve the implementation of programmes supported by the European Social Fund.

In the West Midlands (United Kingdom), the Company Sector Pilot Scheme encourages the private sector to make use of the training provision offered by the European Social Fund. In North-West England, ERDF supports in turn the development of the Liverpool Institute of Performing Arts, an innovative training infrastructure designed to breathe new life into the city centre in decline. In Eastern Scotland a training activity for local employers aims to help them make use of unemployment records for recruitment purposes.

■ **Objective 5b.** In Flanders (Belgium) a vocational training centre has been set up in Diest in which some 120 people a day undergo training oriented towards the regional labour market. This is a good and concrete example of coordination between ERDF/ESF: ERDF co-finances investment in infrastructure, the purchase of machinery and equipment whereas ESF bears some of the operational costs (instructors' salaries, operating costs).

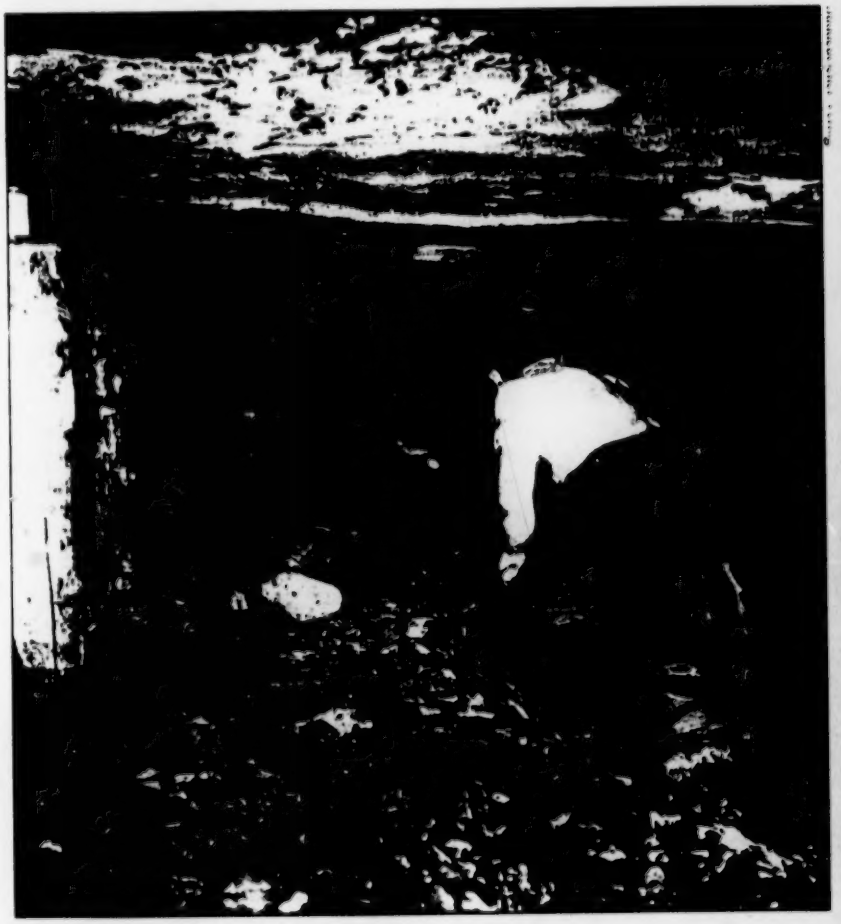
In the United Kingdom one scheme in Wales aims to overcome the lack of skills in rural areas, required for the setting up and management of companies, marketing and export. In rural areas in Tuscany (Italy) an education programme for the environment has been set up based on the natural heritage of the Parco della Maremma.

.... in the programmes prompted by Community initiatives

Via the Community initiatives, the Commission can support activities which help to resolve problems of specific interest on a European level and which supplement the activities of the CSFs. Since 1989, forty Community initiatives have been approved with very varying objectives. Generally speaking, they have proved to be a dynamic element in respect of the activities of the structural funds by making possible experiments in new approaches with greater Community emphasis. Several of them are oriented towards transnational cooperation and the more disadvantaged reasons have definitely profited from them. This is the case, above all, in respect of vocational training: the exchanges of experience and knowledge help to avoid "reinventing the wheel" in this field. The trans-national networks set up within the framework of EUROFORM, NOW, HORIZON (specifically oriented towards human resources) and LEADER and INTERREG are proving promising. The examples given below are restricted to these initiatives.

■ **EUROFORM** (support for new occupational skills and employment opportunities linked to the Single Market by way of trans-national partnerships). In Greece a forum on the contribution of industrial enterprises to vocational training examined the use of computer-aided training or distance learning in the coalmining and metallurgical sectors. In Spain the Mancomunidad del Bajo Guadalquivir, which brings together nine Andalusian companies, has begun setting up a local economy observatory and is in charge of a training programme for trainers.

■ **NOW** (equal opportunities for women in employment and vocational training). This initiative has received support from a



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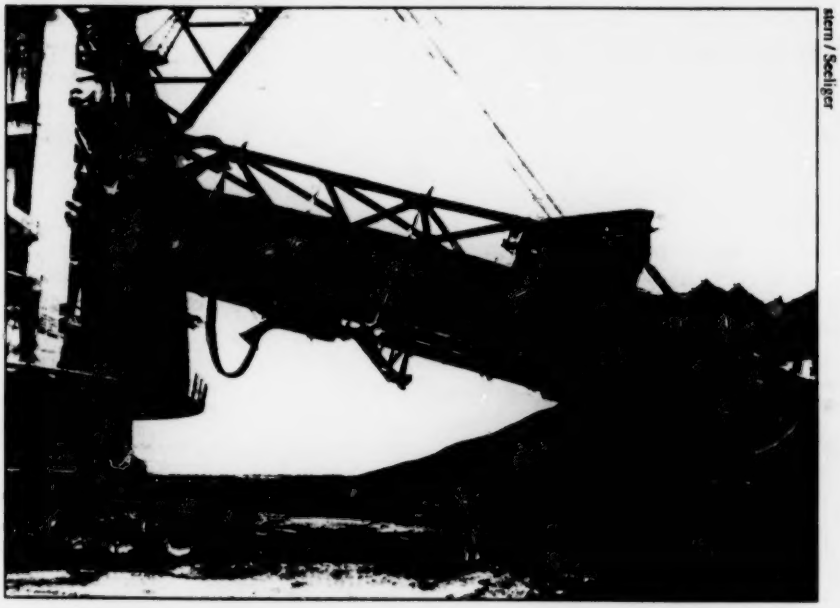
very broad spectrum of bodies, in particular, training institutes as well as numerous regional and local authorities and the social partners. It got off to a brisk start in the regions in Objective 1 and helped to extend ESF activities in the regions in Objectives 2 and 5b.

■ **HORIZON** (economic and social integration of handicapped people and some disadvantaged groups). In Ireland various projects concerning computer-aided education for the handicapped and their access to electronic equipment help to make them more independent. In Hengelo (Netherlands) a new inter-cultural centre aims to give ethnic minorities preparatory training for the launching of activities in the retail trade or services sector. In Greece an assistance programme for the repatriated involves both reception facilities and accommodation, the school integration of children, training courses and practical on-the-job training.

■ **INTERREG** (adaptation of internal border areas to the Single Market and assistance for external border areas). The new Techno-Centre in Freilassing in Bavaria (INTERREG Germany/Austria) is developing a very high level programme for technological cooperation (cybernetics, super computers, ...) with the Austrian University of Salzburg to benefit, first and foremost, the local economy. This programme includes training for entrepreneurs. By contrast, INTERREG Germany/Netherlands is following on from the past experience of the EUREGIO Rhine-Ems-Ijsel in seeking to overcome cooperation problems which exist between management structures, mainly by encouraging bilingualism.

■ **LEADER** (flexible and integrated approaches to rural development). The project Arca Umbria, in Italy brings together a large number of local companies and organizations. Basically it aims to upgrade local agricultural products by means of a quality policy at all stages in the economic process. It involves increasing awareness amongst the local population for this issue, especially via educational institutions. LEADER is characterized by the local and trans-national character of its activities. It draws on the support of 217 local action groups who make up the large European network.



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During the period 1994-99, the activities of the Community initiatives will focus on six subjects: cooperation (trans-boundary, trans-national and inter-regional); rural development; ultra-peripheral regions; employment, small SMEs and industrial change; equal opportunities and the combating of social exclusion; urban development and urban areas in crisis. For that period they will have a budget of ECU 12.7 billion (9% of the resources of the structural funds).

.... in the urban pilot projects and inter-regional networks

Within the framework of its regional policies, the Commission provides local bodies with a series of regional instruments specifically adapted to local development. The weight of local communities in the global economy, whenever the have a high degree of organization and independence, testifies to just how important they are. Furthermore, the objective of economic and social coherence is not just a matter of large-scale equilibrium; it also involves action closer to the field, closer to the people concerned. It implies bridging, which is easier on a local level, traditional divides: private/public, employers/trade unions, commercial sector/associative sector. Experience has shown that this is a fruitful field for vocational training. By means of cooperation networks this action can have multiplier effects despite the limited financial resources available.

Although the Community has no real powers in the field of urban policy, the regulations of ERDF enable the Commission to co-finance pilot projects involving experiments in innovative ideas of European interest which contribute towards economic development and encourage regional policies. Thus, more than 30 urban pilot projects have been launched. Furthermore, the Commission has set up European cooperation networks to encourage direct cooperation between towns and regions of the various Member States: the RECITE programme (Regions and Cities in Europe) has 40 such networks.

■ **Urban pilot projects**. In Rotterdam (Netherlands), an ambitious public/private partnership has been set up to revitalize a former harbour area, namely via training. The project focuses on the construction of a high technology services centre to act as an interface between the local population and the new social housing areas, SMEs, the promoters and public authorities. In Marseille (France) the revitalization of suburban areas is accompanied by programmes for children, training courses for adults within the framework of the construction work undertaken by the responsible authority in the area. In the United Kingdom, London projects link training and the provision of equipment and commercial premises in abandoned buildings. A bus is used to distribute information on opportunities for training and employment; the local employers take part in develop-

ing made-to-measure training schemes for the local population.

■ **European cooperation networks**. The "development agencies" network organizes joint training for the exchange and updating of entrepreneurial training methods. Chambers of Commerce and Industry study on-site the needs of companies in Cagliari, Cork, Dresde, Grenada or Lisbon, in order to develop training suited to the workers, and retraining sessions for middle management. "RESIGMUR" develops computerized systems with geographical information for municipal and regional authorities by providing training for staff.

"Atlantic regions" involves the regions on the Atlantic coast in activities to overcome their peripheral situation, mainly via exchanges of training. "Areas in crisis" (which takes in a series of urban pilot projects) gives a prime position to vocational training in urban areas confronted with profound social crisis.

The Community also provides specific tools for local development and cooperation, including:

■ **Global subsidies**: these are not programmes but a kind of intervention. A direct contractual link is established between the Commission and the development body on-site assigned the task of managing and distributing Community aid. The global subsidies aim to mobilize local partners and resources in order to bring about the economic upgrading of an entire area, involving in particular assistance for SMEs. The LEADER projects are financed in this way. In Ireland the subsidies managed by the Area Development Management are mainly devoted to training for the unemployed in the creation and development of new enterprises.

■ **The European business innovation centres** (CEEI or BIC, Business and Innovation Centres). They aim to stimulate local economies with potential for industrial development. Professional bodies select and offer back-up to innovative SMEs. They make the best use of existing services. They, themselves, provide the missing services and develop entrepreneurial and managerial skills. Almost 100 in number within the EBN network (European Business and Innovation Centres Network), they have proved their worth as catalysts for local resources - be they human, technical or financial.

■ **Euroleaders** is a new programme which every year provides practical training and guidance on a high level to a small number of entrepreneurs with a view to giving their corporate philosophy a European dimension.

Positive signals

This brief overview shows, if it was at all necessary, the high degree of complementarity between vocational training and regional and local development policies. In fact, it is an essential component. Moreover, it is on the regional and local levels that it is best able to identify the actual needs to which it must respond. These needs are all the more greater because the regions concerned are experiencing the most specific difficulties. It is on this level that the new methods can best be tried out, and that the most successful dynamics can be encouraged. The stressing in the Maastricht Treaty of the well understood concept of "subsidiarity" (not a segmentation of levels of responsibility but their improved articulation as a path to increased efficiency) helps to reinforce this process.

At the same time we can see the "horizontal" dimension within the context of networking and cooperation which considerably reinforces the territorial benefits of these activities. Vocational training, based on actual skills, has a lot to gain from this Community added value. However, fruitful experience "in the field", may be, unless tapped it will remain isolated knowledge. The emergence over the last few years of spontaneous initiatives by numerous territorial bodies involving inter-regional, inter-urban and trans-border cooperation is a positive signal. Hence the established practice of several regional and local authorities, given the experience with CSFs, of presenting their reflections in the European context. This gives us grounds for optimism with respect to the Committee of Regions which the Maastricht Treaty wishes to see as a fully-fledged Community institution. This would be an expression of regional and local authority on a European scale.

The possibility for the Member States to integrate the programmes proposed into their development plans is in turn an important development. This reduces the programme phases for structural activities from three to two. This will help to permit more rapid action and will also reinforce the partnership commitment of national and regional authorities in the elaboration stage. It will encourage them to adopt an anticipative approach and increase the adjustment of activities to needs.

The demand in the development plans for a more precise definition of the strategies and goals and improved forecasting of the expected impact goes in the same direction. This will serve to reinforce interaction between Community policies and the cooperation of the structural funds since forecasting is a factor of efficiency. As far as cooperation is concerned, a further factor is the extension of the field of intervention of the funds which helps to better adjust their complementary activities.

Concerning the obligation of the Member States to give consideration to environmental issues, we know that the latter touch on important territorial aspects although there is of course a strong desire for vocational training schemes to develop various environmental occupations.

Finally, the recent increase in the Community, on the initiative of various bodies, of evaluation work is another positive sign, particularly in respect of vocational training, the socio-economic repercussions of which are often difficult to analyze. This development has brought the Commission to set up a technical evaluation group to promote the coherence of evaluation policies of Community, national and regional plans. Furthermore, the pilot programme MEANS (Methods for Evaluating Activities of a Structural Nature) has been launched to adapt these methods to the new forms of Community action and to guarantee their successful handling by all partners. If the prior estimation of the impact of activities still has a long way to go, the thematic evaluations, by contrast, are well developed. Given their forward dimension, they will help to establish priorities. This is a major advantage because it should be borne in mind that reducing economic and social imbalances is a long-term challenge .....

Vocational Training in a Regional Europe

Securing Locations and Profiles from the Perspective of the German Economy

Geographical areas are an important factor in European educational initiatives. They are useful aids for detecting deficits in economic and social development while simultaneously offering targeted strategies to counteract these. The new Committee of the Regions, anchored in the Maastricht treaty, has consciously taken this aspect into account. The reform of the Social Fund, however, has likewise made it absolutely clear that measures of the EU to support and supplement vocational training should not be monolithic in the regions; they should rather be based on a multi-layered approach. The various regions already have geographical, economic, historical and political ties which should be taken into account in promotion programmes and initiatives in order to take advantage of these links and build on functioning networks. The soundest guarantee of bringing this about is broad dialogue amongst all those involved and a decentralized concept for its implementation.

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Generous investment in vocational training is a key factor in ensuring the economic success of enterprises in Germany as in all of Europe. In view of its limited reserves of raw materials, the Federal Republic of Germany has shown a broad-based willingness since the late 1970s to invest not only in the traditional high-quality "dual system" of vocational training with its training centres in enterprises and vocational training schools but also to update the qualifications of personnel at the workplace in order to cope with new developments. "Life-long learning" has become the catchphrase for the continuing vocational training schemes which accompany all modern developments in the production and service sectors. Germans consider initial and continuing training to be crucial elements of economic efficiency and indispensable locational factors, even when the financial reserves of some enterprises become limited in times of economic hardship. The amount of financial investment in vocational training reflects its status: German enterprises invest around DM 45 billion per annum in initial vocational training within the dual system and around DM 40 billion per annum in continuing vocational training.

In the light of this, harmonization of the vocational training systems in Europe would represent bidding farewell to success, at least from the German point of view. It would seem that the demands of economic development point in quite the opposite direction. In all EC Member States, the principal challenge to vocational training systems lies in increased flexibility, enabling enterprises to update fast and thus meet the growing pressure of worldwide competition. For this reason, classical solutions and a rigid, uniform system for all of Europe would seem to be of little use. A Europe of the Citizens, stretching from Lisbon to Dublin, from Athens to Paris is undoubtedly a common goal. Vocational training and qualification follow other rules, however. They are important and indispensable elements of national economic regions, which need competition from within the common Single European Market in the long run in order to prompt innovative developments in education.

Challenges Facing Europe as a Whole

From the point of view of the German economy, it is also undisputed that there are important common challenges in Europe with regard to vocational training. Priority must be given to reducing the rising unemployment levels, strengthening the overall competitiveness of individual economic systems and regions as well as general growth. Amongst other things, the Copenhagen EC summit of June 1993 set clear signals for the contours of a European education and qualification policy.

Within the economic process, the narrow band of vocational training of employees cannot be seen out of context, of course. In every country, it is tightly integrated in a national educational network peculiar to the country that encompasses everything from primary education to initial and continuing vocational training to higher education. Education as a whole is more than vocational qualification, which should be conducted according to the needs of economic development processes and organ-

ized and structured solely according to regional or sector-related criteria. At least general education and also some parts of vocational training represent core elements in a country's cultural and national identity. In some EU Member States including Germany, education is closely bound to issues of national sovereignty under the umbrella of a federal state. Only very few parts of these national educational systems, such as continuing vocational training, are, on the whole, subject to direct market forces which demand high efficiency through flexibility, adaptability and, more importantly, a willingness to update contents and structures. Seen as a whole, each national education system is a product of a specific cultural and historical identity, and the initial reaction of each of these systems to any external pressure to change is to defend itself.

Thus, in the political arena, the cornerstones for vocational training were pegged out early on the road to a united Europe 2000. Initiatives on educational policy taken in Brussels meet with the same reaction as the essentially political objective of a "Europe of the Citizens" as set out in the new treaties on the European Union. It is not without reason that the President of the EC, Jacques Delors, has been demanding since Maastricht that European objectives and the corresponding Community structures become more closely related to the people. This obviously expresses recognition of the fact that in education as in other areas, many "European objectives" have in the past been approached too quickly, too bureaucratically and even too technocratically. Local acceptance often seems to have been overlooked.

For the reasons described above, this development has affected not only major economic policies but also the sensitive sector of education in particular. In the past, the demands of educational policy issued in Brussels and the reality of the situation have often displayed a marked discrepancy. Actions taken by the EC, covering the wide spectrum of structural funds and promotion programmes through to binding regulations on recognizing vocational qualifications, have not always shown the desired degree of sensitivity or enjoyed the cooperation they required. Numerous wrangles about extended or at least the presumed competence of EC bodies, the sometimes over-bureaucratic implementation of even the most useful of initiatives and a lack of coordination between the competent EC bodies has often aroused local suspicion. This has frequently led to the EC Commission in particular being accused of following a policy which favours its own interests.

Preserving Successful National Systems

The new course of Community education and qualification policy can be seen in the Ruperti Report on Community action in the area of general education and vocational training as well as in the words of the President of the EC at the EC summit held in Copenhagen in June 1993. Under the heading "Ways into the 21st century - Guidelines for a new European economic model", Delors demanded a fundamental reform of the education systems in the EC Member States. However, this should hardly be meant to apply to those countries such as Germany which presently have relatively low youth unemployment rates due to their very market-oriented initial and continuing vocational training systems.

Ullstein - Ralph Rieth

From the point of view of the German economy, there is a huge gap - in content as elsewhere - between the goals defined by the President and the more cautious plan laid out in the Ruperti Report. The latter takes greater and more direct account of national reservations about competence and regional needs, to the extent that a range of associated measures is emphasized:

■ Coordination of EC educational policy with other areas of political action: Educational policy should be connected in particular to future continuing vocational training schemes within the framework of the reform of the European Social Fund. An attempt should also be made to link this policy with the Actions of the Community Research Framework Programme (1994-1998).

■ Stronger coordination in the Social Dialogue: The EC Commission intends to cooperate more closely with employees' and employers' representatives than has previously been the case in order to develop its training programmes and carry out these programmes in a manner that is oriented towards the economy.

■ Limiting itself to improving transparency, promoting the exchange of experience and providing more information on initial and continuing vocational training: This corresponds most closely to the tone and individual regulations relating specifically to education in the Maastricht treaty.

■ Streamlining and rationalising the available Action programmes: All the established training programmes, such as LINGUA, ERASMUS and COMETT should be continued, but they should be coordinated more efficiently and even trimmed down.

The German economy, too, would be content with these initiatives. The reform of the promotion programmes could be accompanied by initiatives and policy measures within this non-regulative framework. They could be aimed at creating a European region for promoting cooperation in higher education as well as for promoting important individual issues such as the further development of vocational training and assuring the quality of training. As in other political areas, the principal aim should be the development of a European educational network. Promising approaches and tools would be transparency, information and cooperation right down to the regions of the Community.

Seen from the current economic situation, the Copenhagen summit of June 1993 brought, at least in the medium term, future EC educational policy closer to the intentions of the Treaty of Rome again. Initial and continuing vocational training has become one, if not *the* most significant locational factor in the Single European Market and the European Economic Area. Consequently, it has become the crucial issue in European educational policy at the present time for securing the success of the new unified market.

The EC summit in Copenhagen once again had to take note of the fact that an alarming 20-30% of young people in Europe are leaving school with inadequate training. This situation demands immediate action; solutions must be found for the problems occurring within the economy, in society and in the fields of general education and vocational training.

Extending Accompanying Measures

The Ministers of Education of the EC Member States, brought together within the Council, quite rightly took a pragmatic approach to these developments in Copenhagen and immediately inquired about direct counteraction. The EC Commission wants to compile a comparative analysis of measures undertaken in the individual Member States to integrate young people into working life and society. This study would be useful for German enterprises too, provided the Council couples it with discussions on:

■ Strengthening the links between vocational guidance, general education, vocational training and the needs of the labour market;

■ Reviewing the experience Member States have gained when developing preschool education and new teaching and learning methods and in efforts to deter young people from leaving school early;

■ Tightening the work profile of the EC Commission within the framework of an EC-wide exchange of experience and information, supplemented by new research projects on the relationship between general education and vocational training and on the economy's specific demands for qualifications.

The overall concept of the EC is to be welcomed from an economic point of view, provided priority is given to networking, mobility, exchange and the realization of transnational projects. Until now, however, the Commission's concepts have not sufficed to ensure that national educational structures will be satisfactorily preserved, an assumption which is constantly being asserted in principle. It must be ruled out that networking could lead to the formation of new EC institutions which would restrict the work of national institutions to simply carrying out directives and thus indirectly extend the influence of the EC beyond the new legal foundations defined by the Maastricht treaty.

Certain details of the new structural concept for the reform of the educational programmes are also still open: Who is to decide on the focal objectives and what should they be? How can the various elements of the programmes be separated neatly from one another? What kind of decision-making and supervisory bodies are needed for the large Community programmes? How can the programmes be better attuned in actual practice to the needs and wishes of the Community?

It is often overlooked that, although Article 126 (general education) and Article 127 (vocational education) of the Maastricht treaty envisage a new legal basis for closer educational policy programmes in the EC, it leaves a great deal of leeway in how it is to be interpreted. Similarly underestimated are the other, far more radical measures related to education at the EC's disposal, the implementation of freedom of mobility and equal opportunities in Europe. Unrestricted mobility means full occupational mobility within the Single European Market and, to a certain degree, in adjoining and associated markets. The EC has a catalogue of measures at its disposal with which to achieve this goal, ranging from the binding recognition of vocational qualifications to comparative tables. In

enterprises, this freedom of mobility assumes transparency, but not the compulsory recognition of qualifications.

Noting the Limitations of the Maastricht Treaty

From the point of view of the German economy, a European vocational training policy can only be of use if it contributes towards the further development of the many national education systems at the same time. In order to meet this challenge, complementary and supportive measures should aim at developing differentiated training paths, permeable educational levels and the application of performance criteria as well as ensuring the quality of the contents of training. In this respect, it will be important to ensure that the legal restrictions placed on EC competences in matters of vocational training are not undermined. The political union needs central bodies for coordination purposes. For European education policy this entails a tendency towards increasing power, too, when fulfilling a certain scope for action. From the point of view of the German economy, it is therefore to be welcomed that most Member States insisted on clear boundaries being set for EC vocational training policy in the Maastricht treaty. All bodies within the EC adapt their behaviour to this overall legal principle.

A large part of this would involve opening the proven social dialogue and taking greater account of the interests of small and medium-sized enterprises, as has become evident in recent times, as well as the new cooperation with regions of the EC. Concentrating on large-scale enterprises brings with it the danger that vocational training is conducted primarily according to the principles of industrial policy and that sectoral initiatives are given too much emphasis. Just as with the Euregio Principle, sectoral measures need to be balanced in order to ensure that Community action benefits the educational policies of all EC Member States and that a comprehensive network is developed to transfer experience and information between the highly-developed regions of Europe and those needing assistance.

Better information, transparency and, in particular, cooperation should yield the best results in the careful convergence of the various national educational systems. To this end, the German Federal Constitutional Court also stressed its position as national "watchdog" in the Maastricht decision of 12 October 1993 by repeatedly rejecting an EC "competence" on the basis of the new EC treaties. As far as Germany is concerned, this means that Brussels will only implement educational measures which encourage cooperation between Member States or promote and/or supplement a country's own actions.

A Careful Convergence of Educational Systems

It is obvious that all European nations within the large economic area will have to attune their educational systems to developments at Community level. Whenever economic or qualification systems converge without their being harmonized at the same time or brought into line at all, a large number of new interfaces and transitional solutions need to be created. This always raises a number of unexpected questions, even within closed national systems. These are not necessarily always convenient questions, but they can prompt a much needed impetus for reform.

In this highly sensitive process, the European Community should have no right whatsoever to interfere in the regions without their prior agreement. The reform of the Structural Funds has shown that "complementarity, partnership and support" may only be achieved with the full cooperation of all involved. In the field of vocational training as elsewhere, EC measures will only be effective if they are implemented "taking full account of the respective institutionalized, legal and financial authority of the partners". It is only to be welcomed that the voice of the regions has been strengthened on this common path since Maastricht.

Manfred Vollmer

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On-line service centres as permanent training centres

The imperfections of the information market lead smaller enterprises to adapt downwards and place themselves in the bottom segments of the market and to become less efficient and competitive. This can be remedied not by incentives which lower the cost of information, but by providing enterprises with this information and teaching enterprises to evaluate and use this information profitably. Agencies working with this objective ("on-line service centres") can therefore be seen as permanent training centres.

This article looks at a very specific aspect of vocational training: the continuing training of small businessmen. The content of training, the nature of the agencies providing this training and the links between trainees and trainers are, for this reason, very specific.

Certain business functions raise major problems for small enterprises (i.e. enterprises with less than twenty or twenty-five employees). It is often the case that the entrepreneur - mainly involved in coordinating the production process and in administering, or at least overseeing, accounting records - pays very little attention to these and ends up by referring to information gathered almost at random in a disorganized and fragmentary way.

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Cases of this type are very common. Entrepreneurs working throughout the fashion sector (clothing, knitwear, footwear) find it difficult to obtain reliable information on fashion trends with the result that they work, in some cases, in less profitable areas of the market. Many mechanical engineering entrepreneurs do not receive information on technological innovations and are forced, to obtain this information, to rely on the good will of suppliers (who offer, in most cases, incorrect information). In all sectors in which small enterprises manage to export, it is very difficult to keep abreast of regulations in foreign countries, which often change frequently, and without a knowledge of which it is very risky and difficult to export: as a result they restrict their objectives to neighbouring countries or to countries in which a network of personal acquaintances ensures at least a minimum level of information. Many enterprises that could export do not manage to find out in good time about the tenders available in foreign countries; even when they do locate this information they have great problems in obtaining the full text; lastly, obtaining a good translation may, in many cases, prove to be an unsurmountable problem.

In some cases, enterprises attempt to offset this lack of information using the few resources available to them. Trade fairs, which for many small entrepreneurs are the main way of boning up on technological innovations and trends in the product market, play a very important role in disseminating information. Regional trade fairs, even though they are less prestigious, may also play a significant role from this point of view.

In many other cases, however, enterprises become convinced that knowledge is out of their grasp and operate as though they are in some way inferior to other enterprises to which this knowledge is available. Ambitions and objectives are reduced, doubt is shed on one's ability to master this knowledge and use it profitably with the end result that this information is considered useless. This leads to a kind of crisis of adaptation, the outcome of which is that the enterprise places itself in a market segment which does not require on-going technological updating and does not make it necessary to pay any attention to changes in customers' tastes or, more generally, the product market. By doing this - and this is the key point - the enterprise becomes less efficient and less competitive.

This downward adaptation is less marked in places where many small enterprises working in the same production area exist alongside one another, as is the case in industrial districts. Even in these production systems, it is important to convince enterprises to set themselves more exacting objectives, and to move into more demanding market segments which are less easy to work in and therefore entail less competition of any kind.

What measures can be adopted to curb this downward adaptation, to make information more available and to make enterprises more competitive?

In the past the solution to these problems has normally been based on support measures to promote small enterprises and capital, offering capital or interest cost incentives to these enterprises so that the cost of the information that they need can be reduced by public action.

This policy, which still has many supporters today, is based on a very simple basic idea. Large enterprises normally have all the information that they need to operate correctly; in some cases these enterprises produce this information internally and in some cases they purchase it from special-

ist agencies. In both cases, however, the cost of this information is too high for small enterprises since this cost has to be set against very small volumes of production. Some artificial way of making this cost as low as possible has therefore to be found - normally a system of incentives.

This argument would be founded if small businessmen knew exactly what information they needed to make the most of their business and knew where to buy this information at the lowest cost: i.e. if the information market was a perfect market.

This is not true in practice. As a result of the downward adaptation mentioned above, there is no paying demand for this information from small enterprises. Entrepreneurs do not know how to evaluate the benefits that could be gained from this information, do not know precisely what information to look for and do not know what supplier to place their trust in. Enterprises have a substantial need for knowledge, but this need remains unconscious and unexpressed, and is not converted into a paying demand even when incentives are available in the form of grants. In order to transform this need into an active paying demand, schemes intended specifically to achieve this objective are needed.

A policy which is intended to improve the competitive situation of smaller enterprises must therefore be based on instruments other than incentives: experience suggests that it may be particularly useful to provide enterprises with the "on-line services" that they need. In other words, enterprises need to be given the information itself rather than the resources to purchase this information. As some people have pointed out, the support should not be financial, but "in kind", or, as mentioned, "on-line".

What information needs to be passed on and disseminated?

The previous example gives some idea. In general, this information involves technological and market information which, if correctly used, may make small enterprises more competitive, allowing them to move into the top part of the market which is not usually occupied by countries in which labour costs are low. The aim is therefore to make a great deal of the information normally available to large enterprises available to small enterprises as well.

A number of specific points need, however, to be added.

Action should not be targeted on individual enterprises, but on the population of enterprises trading in a region. This does not mean, however, offering business consultancy, even when its quality is high and its cost low. Nor does it mean identifying certain leading enterprises which can put the information available to good use and demonstrate how useful this information is to other enterprises. The aim is to generate a new awareness throughout the fabric of enterprises. Enterprises have to be convinced that the cultural and technical time lag which prevents them from working on the frontiers of knowledge can be reduced and that they are able to catch up with the new trends dominating technology and the market.

An action strategy must therefore avoid one-off and exemplary action, and should give priority to action aimed at all enterprises. As regards each specific scheme, this or that firm will take up the offer and transform it into changes within the enterprise. The whole of the field needs to be sowed, throwing out a quantity of different seeds and then leaving each seed to germinate where it wishes, where it finds the appropriate soil for growth.

Activities of this type must be managed and conducted at local level. Disseminating information and ensuring that it is used, means, as Becattini has recently pointed out, converting "codified" knowledge into "local" knowledge. As Becattini rightly adds, all local knowledge has its own specific characteristics. Local knowledge is one of the key distinguishing features of every local production system. This means that training content, information dissemination techniques and information presentation methods will differ from place to place, focusing on specific aspects in each of these places - in the same way as a text that is to be translated into different languages. It may be useful, perhaps, to refer to a concrete situation. Applying this method to the textile and clothing enterprises in Leicester (UK) and Carpi (I), which work in the same European market, shows very clearly that the training needs of small businessmen differ. In Carpi, information on new technologies is indispensable and it is very important to continue to improve productivity; in Leicester, the key shortcoming is the inability to follow fashion trends and to work in the market area with a strong fashion content.

In what ways should the agencies providing these services be structured?

As in the case of content, substantial attention needs to be paid to the local situation. In Emilia Romagna the problem has been solved by setting up "service centres" which generally have the legal status of capital companies in which the region has a majority public holding and in which employers' associations and individual employers are well represented. This public presence ensures that the centre operates in the interests of the community as a whole and does not simply defend the interests of a few people and the presence of private individuals ensures that constant attention is paid to the most urgent and important problems. Members pay a registration fee and an annual subscription and pay, below cost, for services purchased. Centres normally manage to finance 40% to 50% of their costs themselves and the rest is provided by the region.

The system employed in the Valencia region is very similar and is, indeed, modelled on the Emilia system. This region also has a number of centres which, like those in Emilia, specialize in individual sectors (textiles, mechanical engineering, wood, etc.), and these centres, again as in Emilia, are all coordinated by a single limited company owned by the regional government which operates as a holding company for the various centres.

In Baden-Württemberg, services for enterprise and this type of continuing training for entrepreneurs are provided by much larger agencies than the Emilia or Valencia centres. A number of foundations, which carry out substantial research work and have strong links with universities, have been in operation for many years.

The territorial aspect of vocational training: the French case

Up to the beginning of the 1980s, vocational training in France was the responsibility of the state. Decentralization affects it in various ways depending on how school-based initial training, apprenticeship and continuing training are considered. The developments differ accordingly. Two features are predominant amongst the solutions selected: the main position held by school-based and university training on the one hand and regionalization on the other. The latter was relaunched by the legislator in 1993 (the attention being given to the regions by Community policy having been mentioned during parliamentary debates).

The issue at hand is the division of competences between the state and the territorial bodies if this is what we mean by territoriality since decentralization could also involve a devolution of powers from the central state authorities to its own external services. However, an analysis of this division as undertaken in the relevant texts, would merely be descriptive and of limited interest if we failed to address the main agruments in the debate centralization/decentralization on the one hand and the prospects presented by the past and the present on the other.

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Furthermore, in order to discuss the relevant questions and problems in a valid manner, particularly against the backdrop of a comparison of the national solutions in Europe, we have to begin by defining the actual terms.

Territoriality can take two forms. The first, which we shall not address aside from the occasional reference involves action by state officials in the administrative regions. In respect of the responsibilities of the *préfets* and academic authorities this merely involves the application in a given territorial area of state vocational training policy. However, it should be stressed that consideration of economic and social data on a local level, something the state welcomes, can constitute a form of territorial adjustment. This may not affect training contents, but it will affect the way in which these contents and, more particularly, a network are set up. The choices may be important in economic policies for industrial areas undergoing restructuring. However, what we should focus on here is the role of the territorial bodies. The list of these is simple: communes, *départements*, regions. Without this being a strict hierarchy, we are leaving aside the communes and *départements* because of editorial constraints, whilst stressing that the development of training activities within the framework of a social policy to combat unemployment leads them either to finance activities or to run them directly. The community which will be the focus of our attention is the region.

Without wishing to be overly complex, we need to define what we mean by **vocational training**. It is not based on an organic definition: the now classic Ministry of "Labour, Vocational Training and Employment" only covers apprenticeship (and not even all of it) and the regulation, funding and supervision of state providers of continuing training. Initial vocational training, in turn, is the responsibility of other ministerial departments, mainly the Ministries of Education and Agriculture. Initial vocational training, which is part of upper secondary education, is the responsibility of the state unless it is private. This mainly concerns training for health occupations, training as engineers, for senior technicians who undergo training at IUTs (University Institutes of Technology), training provided in senior technician sections (STSs) which is decentralized and is run by grammar schools, and legal training. However, its funding often brings in the territorial bodies. Here are some examples:

1. Apprenticeship, **alternance** training, between an apprenticeship master and an apprentice training centre (CFA);

2. School-based initial vocational training leading to various certificates of vocational aptitude (CAP), diplomas of occupational study (BEP), occupational baccalauréat;

3. Continuing vocational training. In addition to initial vocational training we should also mention the baccalauréat for technicians because even if it is designed to prepare for higher education and not for entry into working life, into a specific occupation, it still constitutes technical preparation for occupations in the sector: mechanical engineering, civil engineering, electronics, etc.

For the various forms of vocational training mentioned here, we will examine the decentralization desired at the beginning of the 1980s, the decentralization which was implemented and, finally, more extensive decentralization since the two chambers of parliament have, at the very

Paul Glaser

In some cases - bearing witness to the extraordinary variety of institutional solutions which can be used to solve this problem - the centres operate by organizing types of tutoring which are offered to new enterprises. Law 46 of 1991, which contains incentives of various kinds for enterprises set up in Southern Italy, offers new entrepreneurs the opportunity to receive counselling from a small panel made up of three experts in the sector in which the enterprise is working. In most cases this panel of three is made up of entrepreneurs (from the most advanced Italian regions) who, for reasons of prestige or civic duty, give a helping hand to a young Southerner who might even become their competitor. No panel ever assists more than three or four enterprises. This system has worked well in practice as the counselling provides the new entrepreneurs with very accurate and reliable information on suppliers to be preferred, market areas to be targeted and distribution channels most suited to their products.

Only one conclusion can be drawn from this review of such a wide range of experiments: that the institutional solution to be adopted has to be strongly rooted in the business fabric in which the centre is to operate and should take account of the constraints and opportunities that this business fabric offers. Centres like those in Emilia or Valencia, for instance, would have been very difficult to set up in Southern Italy, where it is very difficult to find those technicians, with a good knowledge of technology and the market, who are indispensable if the centres are to work efficiently.

In conclusion, we need to raise the question that suggested the title of this article. Can agencies that offer on-line services to small enterprises be considered as permanent training centres?

In a perfect market it would be meaningless to compare the availability and use of these services with a training process. Enterprises requiring sophisticated information or services would foster the development of an appropriate supply and this would grow without any need for public action; the agencies offering these services, competing with one another, would gradually improve the quality and the price of their product; the sale of these products would in no way mirror the slow and laborious processes by which skills are introduced into the business fabric. In many cases and for many services, developments have generally followed this route. This is not always the case, however, on all the occasions where it is necessary. The sophisticated service sector is undoubtedly not an efficient market: because enterprises, as mentioned, are very rarely in the particular environmental conditions making it possible for them to evaluate the advantages resulting from the use of sophisticated information or the introduction of innovative and refined production and sales techniques, and because, as a reflex, the production fabric hesitates to offer enterprises what they would need to move into the more demanding areas of the market. Faced with market failures and the process of downward adaptation which has been described, public action seems necessary; action is advisable because enterprises, although they show little interest or are even reluctant at the outset, experiment with the usefulness of new services and improve their competitive position by making good use of these services. Convincing people to experiment with or make efficient use of new types of business management or new production techniques can undoubtedly be seen as a training process.

This identification of on-line services and training has a number of important consequences. The first is that the training, by including areas which are not usually taken into account, is greatly extended. The second can perhaps be seen in the form of the following principle: "the supply of on-line services must be governed by regulations similar to those governing the supply of training". In brief, this means that service centres must be financed out of funds set aside for training, that pricing policies must be intended to promote the use of services, that careful attention should be paid to ensuring that the supply of services is available to everyone and does not entail restrictive practices which give priority to some people and not to others, that the choice of services to be offered should meet criteria of general usefulness and so on. This principle is obviously the more cogent, the more serious the failures of the market that are to be remedied by attempts to stimulate the supply of services.

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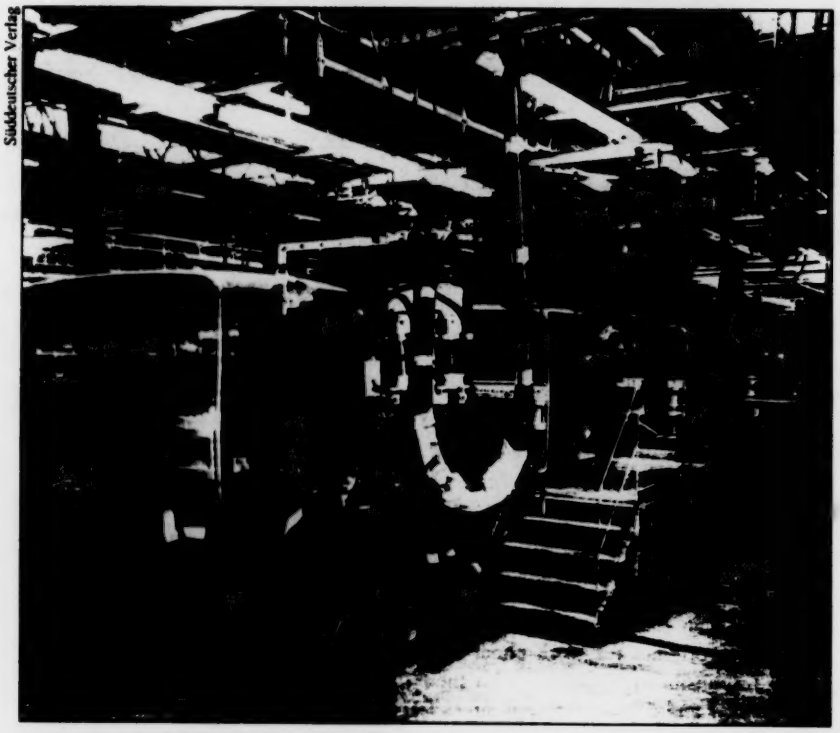
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time when this text was being drawn-up, adopted a law which will affect regional competences. This law has not yet been enacted as an appeal has been lodged with the Constitutional Council.

The desired decentralization

On the eve of the 1980s the oldest form of training for skilled blue- and white-collar workers, apprenticeship, was regulated in the provisions of the Labour Code, national legislation which had to do with the lowest level of qualification. It was mainly for the craft sectors (food, hairdressing, motor vehicle repair, carpentry). Since 1960 the number of apprentices has been falling. Vocational training was provided either by private institutions, most frequently with a state contract and usually within the framework of national programmes or by public institutions. The state decides on, introduces and withdraws training programmes, sets up institutions, and organizes their geographical implementation. Continuing training finally appeared at the beginning of the 1970s and was the subject of state inter-ministerial policy. It was set up by bodies such as AFPA (Association for adult vocational training), FNE (National employment fund), and FAS (Social action fund for migrant workers).

Decentralization has been undertaken in a general climate of the development of administration, democracy and support for the idea that the link between training and employment is the dominant factor in a policy of economic development. In the areas under review, it operates on the level and to the benefit of the regions considered as it provides sufficient space and, furthermore, people responsible for economic planning.

Under the provisions of the law of 25 January 1985, the regions develop three training plans: a forward plan for continuing training, a forward plan for apprenticeship and a forward plan for initial training. From the very beginning, the idea behind this choice of a policy of decentralization has been regional coherence in respect of training within the framework of adherence to the national plan and national political options.

However, in the division of powers between the state and the regions, the statutory provisions reflect the areas of least resistance to decentralization. The law of 7 January 1983, section IV, articles 82-86, gives the regions powers under common law for the implementation of continuing vocational training activities and apprenticeship, an essential extension as the text says of powers in the field of planning, economic development and regional development. Consideration is also given to the areas of employment, whose boundaries extend beyond *département* boundaries and, in future, communal boundaries. Apprenticeship is fully decentralized with the exception of a few national recruitment centres. In respect of continuing training, inter-ministerial responsibility and the support from funds explains why the state maintains its powers, exceptions to regional responsibility under common law: studies, experiments and, above all, funding of practical stages by bodies involved in several regions, bodies where trainees are selected without regard to their regional origins and bodies with priority programmes, e.g. the social and occupational integration of young people, qualification programmes, activities for migrant workers. As far as school-based initial training is concerned, by contrast, the state maintains its control of educational activities: training, certificates, management of the institutions and staff. The regions are delegated responsibility for equipment and operational expenditure on the basis of a forward training plan. This is an instrument for planning time and space which envisages the setting up of various training programmes. It is followed by the establishment of a forward investment programme. Decentralization is not meant to lead to a shift of expenses, the regions receive a regional allowance for school equipment from the state.

Decentralization in practice

There has been no fundamental change in the law as far as decentralization is concerned after the introduction of the choices described above, either in 1983 for continuing training and apprenticeship or in 1986 for initial school-based training. If we leave aside the questions of the beneficiaries of training and observations of an increase in the number of people involved in continuing training (public and private training bodies), the replies to the questions "who decides" and "who pays" have

changed very little in respect of the law but greatly in respect of day-to-day practice. Observations of this development, which are rich in replies to questions about territoriality, enable us to identify, on the one hand, the features common to the three sectors reviewed and, on the other, the different sectoral developments.

The common features

The development of forward plans has proved to be a difficult exercise. It has been undertaken with varying degrees of success, here as a response to local demands and there as a true planning effort. This development has been undertaken at a time of confidence in the influence of training on the economy. This is based on the conviction that even if establishing a quantitative balance between employment and training is still a dream, it is possible for there to be a qualitative balance. The economic crisis, industrial restructuring, the increase in youth unemployment, demographic upswing and the major increase in the social demand for training have all led to a major challenge to the concept of the balancing mechanism and to a process of regionalization which tends to be considerably affected by the concept of a social approach to unemployment. The maintenance and development of qualifications has been the goal.

Coherence between national and regional policies has little to do with the consultative bodies set up at regional and *département* levels. In continuing training it has emerged, above all, from the relations which have been established between the state services, the *préfets*, and the regional services. In initial school-based training, the fear of conflicts between two authorities "condemned to understanding each other", the one the mistress of state-financed jobs, the other the mistress of the premises, has proved to be unfounded given the scale of communal support for the political option of raising the levels of qualification and the need to ensure the reception of pupils. It is much more the case in general education than in technological or vocational channels.

The elaboration of the plans, particularly the school plan, has, to varying degrees, been an opportunity for work under regional responsibility in liaison with the *département* and the employment areas. But these infra-regional activities have mainly involved either the preparation of regional plans or the state-region plan contracts, many of which include training.

By contrast, inter-regional approaches are few and far between except in agriculture, the food processing industry and fishing. In all the regions efforts have focused on grammar schools, with an average ratio of 3:1 for continuing training. For them it is mainly a question of investment, for the others actual operation. This should not be viewed as indicating a preference for the school-based model; the explanation has been given above. In the case of these large-scale major commitments it is difficult to establish what is channelled into technological and vocational training.

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Sectoral developments

Despite clear political support in almost all regions, **apprenticeship** has not undergone the expected development. Up to 1987, it was indeed restricted to the lowest level of vocational training, the CAP (certificate of vocational aptitude). In the space of 20 years apprenticeship has in fact lost some 26,000 apprentices in terms of national figures. The introduction of training on level IV (occupational baccalauréats) and level III BTS (advanced technician's diploma) did not bring the number of apprentices back to their level in 1970-71.

School-based initial training has prompted the joint appraisals by politicians and observers. Aside from the difficulties linked with a forward training plan, the first observation concerns the scale of voluntary financial commitment, very much in excess of the regional allowances for school equipment. One of the reasons has been mentioned: to guarantee the reception of pupils. The other is, without doubt, support for the national political option of raising the levels of qualification. Technological and vocational education, within the larger framework of a policy in favour of grammar schools, seems to be the main stepping stone to diversified paths to success and an increase in levels of qualification. Introduced for the first time in 1985-1986 (1,300 pupils), the occupational baccalauréat today exceeds the 130,000 mark. The massive increase (more than 100,000 pupils in the higher technician sections) owes a lot to regional policies. National policies implemented by the rectors of academies and the policies of the regions are in harmony.

The regional efforts are often based on the conclusion of plan contracts with the state. Observation of regional financial commitments reveals considerable differences (percentage of budget, amount earmarked per capita or per young person) but these

do not lead to inequalities: they reflect efforts to reduce former differences in the levels of schooling or in the number of people successfully taking the baccalauréat in their respective age group.

Two extensions to regional powers are stressed. The funding of some equipment (informatics, NC tools, language laboratories, cable television) first of all has to do directly with the educational activities which the state had intended to reserve for itself by merely decentralizing equipment and operation. The state-region plan contracts have often assumed responsibility for the creation of university institutes of technology (IUTs) in medium-sized towns whereas the state has maintained responsibility for higher education. This has involved funding from the communities within the framework of the "University 2000" plan allowing for financial partnership without a sharing of power and this applies de jure.

Except for complementary local initiatives, the territorial bodies influence training provision in quantitative and qualitative terms and its distribution in space but do not influence qualifications (contents and certification).

As for **continuing training**, firms continue to finance more than half by way of compulsory contributions; the state supplies two-thirds of the rest. This means that the territorial bodies supply only 10%. The coherence between national and regional policies is guaranteed by the technical services of the state and the regions.

Observation of regional policies prompts three remarks. First of all, we should stress the difficulty in separating continuing vocational training activities from public policies of assistance to agriculture, craft industries or sectoral policies for areas such as electronics, food processing and tourism. Then we have to supply two diametrically opposed interpretations about the relations between the state and the regions: for some, the regions are in control of their programme and likely to provide parallel funding to state assistance. Hence, they have very extensive powers. For the others the growing importance attached to priority training under state control reduces regional independence. Last observation, finally: the initial framework for training built on two objectives, job security and occupational upgrading, has been replaced by a large number of diversified programmes for various categories of participants - young people, workers, the unemployed, women - and the goals of integration, retraining, qualification.

Paul Glaser

On the eve of the legislative elections in March 1993, the regions called for an increase in powers so as not to be reduced to playing the role of a cash register but also for economic and social reasons.

Extended decentralization?

The recent period has been suitable for evaluation. The territorial approach to training seems still to be unsure. Planning has not taken the form of a reaction to a new responsibility but rather the dynamic creation of networks. It leads to a levelling of educational strategies. The local approach has been introduced and is developing. The analysis of needs is improving. Decision-making aids are being introduced. The question of regional competences has been raised: Is the regional level pertinent in planning? Is it important in reflection? in facilitation? even although it is clear that there can be no strict balance between training and employment. This has to be varied.

The Giraud Law, a five-year law on employment, has been adopted but not yet enacted. The provisions of that law on training and apprenticeship are not constitutionally contested and do answer some questions.

The debate on the territorial level in parliament, on the choice between regions and employment areas has been decided in favour of the former.

The development of apprenticeship is both welcomed and encouraged, but without any change in responsibilities.

By contrast, there are plans to transfer to the regions continuing vocational training activities financed by the state for young people aged under 26 undergoing practical courses of training. The regions will have to prepare a regional vocational training plan for these young people, a medium-term plan which will cover all initial vocational training, apprenticeship, integration contracts in alternance, and activities for young people seeking employment. This plan will have to take account of the forward plans for apprenticeship, continuing training, initial training and the national forward plan for agricultural training programmes. Within the general framework of regional coherence the activities will have to be developed from the bottom up by targetted development to tap local potential.

Regionalisation trends in the Netherlands in the field of vocational education and training: tensions and prospects[1]

Regionalisation trends in the area of education and training in the Netherlands are developing from various origins, depending on the system of vocationally oriented education and training.

Consequently there are not only various actors of varying dominance at the regional level, there is also a relationship between actors at the national level and those in the region. Attention is drawn in the article to tensions both in the "vertical" and "horizontal" relationships between actors due to the absence of suitable control concepts. The prospect of the region as the level at which flexibility-approach problems in the relationship between education, training and the labour market can be successfully tackled thus runs the risk of being nipped in the bud. The article ends with a plea for the development and application of control concepts in which the key terms are "consistency", "network capacity" and "unsheathing".

Regionalisation as the exponent of a flexibility approach

More or less autonomous developments in the education system and in the labour market play an important role in bringing vocational education and the labour market into line. The open character of a society, expressed among other things in continuous, often ad-hoc, provision of information (e.g. via the mass media), various channels for guidance on the choice of school and occupation and also all kinds of contacts between educational institutions and firms/institutions (e.g. via the participation of firms in school boards, traineeships etc.) plays an important role in this. It would be naive to deny the significance of these autonomous developments. In the context of the 'training offensive' which was launched some fifteen years ago and is constantly being given fresh impetus, however, all kinds of initiatives are becoming increasingly important in order to work specifically towards optimising the match between vocational education and the labour market. In this context we refer to connecting strategies: more or less purposeful and systematic attempts to reduce discrepancies: preventive and anticipatory or curative and reactive. Two strategies are often broadly distinguished: the direct planning approach and the flexibility approach.

In the *planning approach*, a direct link is aimed for between education and the world of work. Planning methods are adopted in connection with this approach by which vocational education should be geared to the quantitative and qualitative needs of the labour system. These involve both forms of manpower planning by which the

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Both are currently conducting research into ways of matching metal training courses better to the needs of firms in the Central Gelderland region as part of their final dissertations.

capacity of vocational training courses should be brought into line with the anticipated need for manpower and forms of curriculum planning with which an attempt is made to gear the content of vocational training courses to the qualification needs of jobs for which training is given. The *flexibility approach* is based on the fact that the labour system is continuously subject to change. Qualification requirements therefore change rapidly. This approach is also based on processes of mobility and substitution existing in the market, and consequently on a substantial potential for flexibility. Owing to the fact that future developments - in both the quantitative and qualitative senses - are difficult to predict, it is aimed at enhancing and making better use of this potential. On the basis of this analysis, an ideal-type policy model of a flexibility approach has been designed by the Organisation for Strategic Labour-Market Research (OSA) in the Netherlands; this model has the following three key elements (van Hoof, 1987):

- de-specialisation of initial vocational training courses;
- a flexible system of intermediate provisions for practical education and training;
- supplementary job-oriented training opportunities.

Organisational limitations on such a strategy are:

- the existence of regulated contacts between education, trade and industry and the government, and
- a certain degree of decentralisation of policy with respect to vocational education and training, which must give individual training institutions more scope to respond to the specific needs of trade and industry.

The model described above should not be regarded as a blueprint. The differences between sectors and occupational categories are too great for that to be possible. One of the key questions in policy discussions is what precise distribution of tasks there should be between the different segments of the system of vocational education and training: initial vocational education, intermediate provisions and job-oriented training. And, equally importantly, what learning paths belong to what segment and under whose responsibility these fall.

We have described answers to questions of this type elsewhere as an organisational issue. Contacts between education, trade and industry and government and some decentralisation of policy as the organisational limitations in order to give form and content to a flexibility approach can be regarded as components of a natural matching strategy. In this strategy an attempt is made to come as close as possible to the fluidity of the traditional interweaving of work and learning, albeit under completely different social conditions, in terms of both organisation and content (for example by accentuating the practical component of training courses) (Hövels, 1993).

We find elements of both types of approach in the Netherlands. The flexibility approach has gained substantial ground in recent years, whilst the planning approach is declining sharply in popularity. In terms of policy, significant impetus has been given to this by two influential advisory committees, the Wagner committee (in the early eighties) and the Rauwenhoff committee (1990). One of the most important results of the growing influence of the flexibility approach is the emphasis given - both by the government and the social partners - to the *region* as the level at which vocational education, training and the labour market can meet with the greatest likelihood of success. This emphasis on regionalisation arises from a trend towards deregulation, the aim of which is to offer greater scope to decentralised actors. Territorial decentralisation as such goes hand-in-hand with social and functional decentralisation.

Regionalisation: different segments and actors

The articulation of the region as the spearhead of a flexibility approach in the Netherlands is not uniform and homogeneous. This is because regionalisation is started for different segments of the vocational education and training system and with the involvement of actors of varying dominance in each of the segments. The actors at the central level not only have their own background, traditions and interests, they also have their own relationships with their counterparts at the decentralised - or regional - level. We shall outline the various trends towards regionalisation in turn. The first one relates to initial vocational education with the government as the key actor at the national level and the educational institutions as the key actors at the regional level. Secondly there is the training segment for job-seekers, with the government as the key actor at the national level together with central organisations of employers and employees and at the regional level the regional - also tripartite - manpower services organisations. Finally there is the training of those in work with the sectoral employers' and employees' organisations as the key actors with regional trade and industry as the regional counterpart.

This is an ideal-type differentiation according to segments and dominant actors in these segments. We adopt this difference in order to illustrate the present picture of regionalisation trends in the Dutch situation as sharply as possible.

One of the complicating factors in reality is, for example, the fact that the (primary) apprenticeship system is counted as part of initial vocational education, but sectoral trade and industry - certainly as far as the practical component is concerned - is a dominant actor there. Nor is it straightforward to fit the increasing involvement of social partners - centrally and in each sector - in school-based vocational education into this ideal-type classification.

Government and educational institutions

The field of vocational and adult education, which is highly fragmented in the Netherlands, should be made more coherent, according to the Minister of Education and Science (see also Kraayvanger and van Onna, 1990). The various laws in this field will be replaced from 1996 by an integrated statutory framework for both vocational and adult education. In anticipation of this new legislation, institutions

for vocational and adult education are being encouraged to merge and reform themselves into regional training centres (ROCs). These ROCs should consist of a school for senior secondary vocational education (MBO), a school for vocational-guidance education (BBO), a school for general adult education (VAVO), an institution for basic education (BE) and in principle also an institution for social studies. It is intended that some fifty regional training centres will be set up attended by an average of 14,000 trainees; there are still around 400 different institutions with a total of almost 700,000 trainees (Engberts and Geurts, 1993). A large degree of autonomy has been granted to the new institutions that are to be formed. The government assumes that increase in scale will benefit the quality of education, as well as the connection with the labour market and a tailored supply for participants. The process of increasing scale began a few years ago with the merger operation in senior secondary vocational education (MBO).

The new control concept will lead to educational institutions which in principle occupy a powerful position in the regional network of relevant actors in the fields of vocational education, training and the labour market.

Regina Bernes / laif

However, comments are being made from various quarters as this concept is being worked out. Dercksen and van Lieshout (1993) point out that the independence of schools is still severely limited by the tradition of central planning in Dutch education. There is indecision in the drive towards independent schools between two ideas: must schools be entirely free in the training they supply (the 'Anglo-Saxon model') or should this freedom be limited to supply in a centrally limited number of training courses, with centrally established attainment requirements and examinations (the 'Continental model')? Both models have implications for the financing of education, the management of the educational institutions and the cooperation between education and trade and industry. The Anglo-Saxon model of an independent school invites cooperation between individual schools and firms. Schools and firms can coordinate education and work more closely, and the cooperation will differ for each school and firm. The Continental model is based on more uniform cooperation between education and trade and industry. Both models are highly compatible with the idea of partnerships of individual schools and firms, but the possible range differs between the models. In the Anglo-Saxon model virtually everything is possible. In the Continental model national restrictions limit the possible impact of partnerships. Developments in secondary vocational education (in the Netherlands senior secondary vocational education (MBO) and the apprenticeship system) according to Dercksen and van Lieshout are tending - in contrast to those in higher education - more towards the Continental model. They state that for a consistent policy it is necessary to make a choice between the two models, and blame the government for the fact that this has been lacking to date.

Engberts and Geurts (1993) point out emphatically that the greater autonomy of the institutions does not mean that the educational institution has become a market organisation or free enterprise. It is and remains a task organisation, and final responsibility is and remains with central government. The major difference compared with the past is that this government stipulates much less than it used to how particular aims should be achieved, but does want to know whether and to what extent established aims are achieved. They

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too articulate problems which threaten the establishment of a productive relationship between deregulation and improvement of the quality of education: deregulation is linked too closely to savings, in the government educational optimism has taken hold (schools are regarded too much as a 'depository' for widely differing wishes and too much is therefore asked of them) and inconsistent regulation is disturbing the new relationships. There is often little scope for the autonomy of institutions in the new regulations.

Engberts and Geurts note that regulation and improvement of the quality of education do not necessarily go together. For a productive relationship the government and institution need to accustom themselves to their new roles. The new control concept must be 'learnt' by both parties.

We wish to point out for the sake of completeness that educational institutions since the end of the eighties have been given the opportunity, alongside their regular tasks, to enter the free training market with a supply of courses and in so doing acquire additional revenue (contract activities). This new task must strengthen the independent and autonomous role of the institution in the region.

Government, social partners and regional manpower services boards

Unemployed people or *employees threatened with unemployment* may be eligible for training via the Manpower Services Organisation (Arbeidsvoorziening). This has for many years been done via the Manpower Services Organisation's 'own' training institutes: Vocational Training Centres (CV), Centres for Vocational Guidance and Vocational Practice (CBB) and the Women's Vocational Schools (VVS).

The Manpower Services Organisation was made independent with effect from 1 January 1991. Responsibility for acting as intermediary and providing training has been placed with the 28 Manpower Services Boards (RBAs). These have tripartite management (regional employers, employees and local authorities).

The new organisation is financed with collective funds, but the 1991 law stipulates that the Minister is to stand aside as much as possible and the new organisation has its own budget at its disposal. This means a built-in area of tension between the desire to let the RBA operate independently and the responsibility of the central provider of funds (Lubbers, 1992). At national level it is also the Central Bureau for Manpower Services (CBA) (likewise with tripartite administration). Although the CBA ('certain matters are dealt with centrally and each RBA otherwise deals with its matters itself') in principle stays at a distance, this in itself in turn provides an area of tension between regional organisations and the central administration.

The RBAs are considered each to be developing their own policy and are also actively involved in doing so. This policy should be directed towards promoting a 'fair and appropriate link between demand and supply in the region'. As far as this is concerned, they are considered to fulfil a regional function at regional level. RBAs can, among other things, have their 'own' training schemes (with a total capacity of around 40,000 trainees). In practice, the Manpower Services Organisation is therefore not just an actor on the demand side of the training market but on the supply side too. However, they also encounter other actors on the supply side. In this context, the manpower services organisation is criticised as being a 'truck system' (or perhaps better, according to Dercksen and van Lieshout, 1993, 'We know ourselves').

However, the manpower services organisation can also buy in courses externally from private institutes or schools. It has been under a statutory organisation for a few years, with an established budget (for its own training schemes). It can ask schools in the region at least for a bid for a course which it wants. The purpose of this is to give impetus at regional level to effective coordination between relevant actors in the segment of initial vocational education (with its opportunities for contract activities) and actors in the segment of training for those in work. In order to strengthen the position of publicly financed education - or their contract activities - in the training market and in particular acquire orders from the Manpower Services Organisation, the Regional Education Bureaux (RBOs) were set up some time ago, temporarily for a limited period and with the intention of 'settling' into the regional educational structure after some time.

A brokering function has been formally foisted onto the RBOs, but Dercksen and van Lieshout (1993) point out that they in fact function far more as interest organisations: they bring together a part of the supply side of the training market. A comparable function for another part of the supply side of the training market has been set aside for what are known as the Private Regional Educational Platforms (PREPs), which attempt to bring together the private training institutes and also gain as large a share as possible of the spending of the RBAs.

At the regional level it is obviously not just actors on the supply side which play a role. On the demand side there are the RBS themselves (their dual position) and obviously those who eventually demand training, or job-seekers and in particular firms (with actual or potential vacancies). The relationship between RBSs and firms is crucial, and there is still something missing here, not just because of the poor articulation of demand in practice on both sides but also due to communication deficiencies and mutual image-forming. The problems encountered by RBAs in bringing about an effective training plan and the 'competition' of other bodies and channels in their mediating activities are a good illustration.

As in initial vocational education, there can be said to be 'vertical' tension in the manpower services organisation between the central level and the autonomy of the regional organisations, which raises questions about the consistency in the elaboration of the control model selected. In the 'horizontal' sense there is the relationship of tension with actors in the area of publicly financed vocational education and also the firms. Dercksen and van Lieshout point, for example, to the RBOs and PREPs which, although they highlight part of the public and private training supply respectively, nevertheless entail the risk of cartels being formed (including price agreements) and a less effective distribution of the training market (Dercksen and van Lieshout, 1993). We also draw attention in

this context to the risk of suboptimal utilisation of the training capacity available at regional level, for example that of the manpower services organisation for initial vocational education (see also Cie Dualisering, 1993).

In the interests of a good relationship between initial vocational education, training and the labour market, a joint action by the regional actors in the area of initial vocational education and in the area of the training for job-seekers appear to have high priority. In principle it does not matter much whether this happens via more market-oriented or more control-oriented concepts. Consistency in the choice and elaboration of a particular concept appears to be far more essential. At the core, adequate elaboration and application of the concept of 'network capacity' at regional level in our opinion can offer interesting prospects (Eimers, 1994).

Sectors and regional trade and industry

Crucial actors in the region are obviously the firms and other labour organisations in the region, certainly also in their relationship with the actors in the areas dealt with previously. They are crucial in two senses. Firstly, it is they who determine the demand on the labour market, in both the quantitative and qualitative senses. Secondly, they are in principle also providers of courses, both for the training of those in work (in-company training, internally or externally) and for the apprenticeship system and/or the practical component of school-based schemes. Firms, in brief, have a dual function: that of a consumer of qualifications and that of a (co-)producer of qualifications. This makes them particularly important as actors on the regional playing-field.

Of particular interest for the purposes of this article are the developments that have occurred in recent years under the influence of national employers' and employees' organisations for each sector or industry. The central agreement in the Joint Industrial Labour Council in 1982 has provided a significant boost (van Dijk et al, 1987). This has led to agreements - often in a collective agreement (CAO) - between employers' and workers' organisations in which vocational education (particularly apprenticeship) and training have acquired a key position. These agreements have often been embedded in Training and Development (O&O) Funds for each industry (with bipartite control) and are given more detailed shape there. These are training funds for each industry on the basis of an overall regulation: part - varying from one industry to another - of the pay ends up in these funds. In addition, the funds are filled with a subsidy regulation of the CBA to stimulate the apprenticeship system (BVL). The Netherlands now has some 25 'O&O funds'. In addition, there are some 30 social funds, from which more training activities are provided.

Sector policy in the area of apprenticeship and training of those in work differs from industry to industry, including with regard to the form given to it. With regard to the apprenticeship system, the creation of Joint Training Activities (GOAs) is of particular interest. These are alternatives to the traditional form of apprentice training according to the "on-the-job" model and with a linked learning and working agreement. The form GOAs take varies from one industry to another, with "on-the-job" or "off-the-job" training, the participation of one or more firms (on a rotating basis) in the practical component and the involvement of regional practical centres (cf. Frietman, 1990) as important aspects. It is estimated that at present GOAs account for over 25% of participation in the apprenticeship system (Cie Dualisering, 1993).

Sector policy with regard to the training of employees covers a broad range. It varies quite widely: training leave or other training rights, making the available supply of training transparent (e.g. by means of catalogues), subsidising the training plans of firms - whether or not approved beforehand by the O&O funds - and systemati-

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cally building up a training infrastructure for the sector.

In a number of industries the sector policy has explicitly acquired a regional component. We encounter examples of this in the building industry, where regional groupings of building firms run their own regional practical training centres and in the metalworking and electrical-engineering industries where regional councils (with bipartite control) are a cornerstone in the implementation of education and training policy. In some regions participating firms put their own training capacity at the disposal of the regional council. These may be "on-the-job", but also "off-the-job" training places (learning areas in firms and company schools). The lead is often taken by a large firm in the region with its own company school. In other regions there are regional practical training centres where apprentices are trained and also acquire practical experience (in the form of traineeships) in nearby firms.

The training capacity existing in regional trade and industry in each sector is utilised not just for practical training in the apprenticeship system, but also - and sometimes increasingly - for the further training of employees.

Regionalisation from trade and industry further complicates the regional playing field. The relationship between the sectoral social partners at the national level (or the O&O funds) and individual firms in the region is often not devoid of problems because the commitment between central organisations and their supporters (firms and employees) is not self-evident. Rather than via strictly controlled elements in the control concept, attempts are made here via "enticements" (equalisation, money, guidance and information) to optimise the (vertical) relationship. It is also striking that in the Dutch relationship it has to date been employees (via the trade unions) at national level which have jointly determined education and training policy but have not done so at the level of individual firms and other labour organisations. At the same time strongly sector-oriented actors have appeared on the scene from trade and industry. We are referring here to groupings of different firms. These are manifested, as mentioned earlier, in many different forms, and can also play an important role of their own in the region. Their continued existence depends to a significant extent on subsidies from the national O&O funds.

Promising approaches in the region: an illustration

As indicated earlier, practical training centres have been created in various industries at regional level. In addition, ROCs have been set up or are under development in a number of regions. At the regional level, various forms of collaboration are found to arise between regional practical training centres of a branch of industry, firms, ROCs being set up and the RBA (van Meijs and van Zeijts, 1994).

A collaborative grouping of metal firms has been created in the province of Friesland on the basis of a sectoral initiative, for example. This grouping runs its own training centre, the Friesian Metal Training Centre (FOM). Apprentices are trained there in a simulated practical situation for a diploma in the apprenticeship system. Practical training for job-seekers also takes place in cooperation with the RBA and the Vocational Training Centre, and further training courses are provided for employees of firms in the region.

This grouping promotes close involvement of regional trade and industry in education and training. Firms bear part of the administrative responsibility, contribute financially and draw future skilled workers directly from the practical training centre. The participating firms provide placement intentions, in which they express their willingness to offer one or more trainees a job in the firm at the end of the training. Another benefit is that there is a point to which firms can address questions relating to further training. Many firms, particularly smaller ones, need support on training matters. The regional practical training centre can meet this need.

In the field of vocational and adult education, a Regional Training Centre (ROC) has been created in Friesland: the ROC Friesland College. This regional institute provides training courses at senior secondary vocational education (MBO) level in the sectors of technology, chemistry, economics, services and health care, and basic and adult education is provided. Contacts already existing between staff of the organisations concerned have had a favourable impact on the creation of the ROC. There is now more cohesion between the different training courses. Various horizontal links (between sectors) and vertical links (between levels of training) have been created through spearpoint projects. There is, for example, a metals unit where all the metal training courses of the ROC Friesland College are accommodated.

A part of the ROC Friesland College which has been made independent is the Contract Activities body, which provides further training activities in the private market.

An interesting fact in the context of the collaboration between the different actors at regional level is that the Contract Activities body carries out managerial tasks for the Friesian Metal Training Centre (FOM). This body also undertakes research into the training needs of the firms taking part in the FOM. In this way a horizontal network arises between an educational institution of the government and a practical training centre of a branch of industry.

Another type of impetus for horizontal links consists of personal affiliations, such as a coordinator who is employed both in the regional practical school and in the ROC. This offers prospects for regional coordination between the different actors and opportunities for the exchange of expertise. The contacts already existing between the BBO (now part of the ROC), the training centre of the firms and the Vocational Training Centre have cleared the way for closer cooperation between the RBA or Vocational Training Centre and the FOM.

There are examples of horizontal collaborative groupings in other regions too. In most regions, the theoretical and practical training in the apprenticeship system takes place at different locations, which does not have a favourable impact on coordination. On the other hand, in the practical training centre for the metal and electrical-engineering firms in the Cuijk region, for example, the theoretical teaching is given by the Den Bosch MBO college at the site of the practical training centre. Here too con-

tacts arise between different regional actors which benefit the quality of the training.

It can be concluded from the above examples that where conditions exist for forming networks between the different actors, meaningful initiatives for regional collaboration are also found to develop.

Conclusions

The articulation of the interests of the region as an area of coordination for vocational initial training, further training and the labour market in our view cannot be regarded merely as the result of buck-passing by national actors. The region as an area for coordination offers interesting prospects. It is not just the considerations underlying regionalisation trends that suggest this. Promising initiatives are also developing in the practice of some regions, as we have illustrated.

A learning and familiarisation process is obviously necessary to use the synergy in the regional actors and the capacity at their disposal to optimise the relationship between education, training and the labour market. It has become clear from this paper that there are numerous actors on the regional playing field, each with their own positions. These positions are determined to a significant extent by their differing origins, and therefore imply different interests and prospects. Viewed in this light, there is a very real danger that regionalisation trends in this area will result structurally in a "counterproductive" jungle of actors and coalitions. This is all the more the case as we have only shown here an ideal-type outline of different origins and actors operating on them. In reality, the arsenal of relevant actors on the playing field is far greater. An example is the increasing significance of actors in the area of youth assistance and local authorities in the context of combating early school-leaving (Eimers, 1994).

In our view it should not remain simply a matter of stimulating activities at the regional level, and priority should be given instead to working out and applying appropriate control concepts. That means control concepts which fit in with the changed relationships due to regionalisation between actors and at the same time control concepts on the basis of which satisfactory solutions can be found for the great problems of content in the area of education, training and the labour market. Three spearpoints can be distinguished in this context.

Firstly it is a matter of appropriate control concepts for the relationship between actors at central and decentralised levels. Following Dercksen and van Lieshout, we are primarily in favour in this context of *consistency* in the chosen concept, whatever model or principle is chosen as a guide.

Secondly it is a matter of appropriate control concepts for synergistic utilisation of the power and capacities of the various actors in the region: a "horizontal" control concept at the level of the region itself. A key term for the development of this appears to us to be *"effective network capacity"*.

Finally, it is a matter of creating appropriate limitations in terms of the relationship between and matching of actors at the central level. Insofar as this is taken as a point of departure, a horizontal control concept is required at the national level. Important entry points for this appears to us to be *"unsheathing"*, "efficiency" and "reliability" in the employment of available resources.

As far as we are concerned, this is emphatically linked to a form of output checking. The criteria for output ought to be derived from standards which primarily relate to solutions which do justice to the mutual *connection* between the content-related problems which are at issue: a good initial vocational qualification for everyone, an appropriate and fair distribution of existing employment and adequate satisfaction of the needs for qualifications of firms and other labour organisations. The continued elaboration of adequate control concepts themselves cannot be guided solely by technocratic principles; the problems of content - and particularly the connection between them - should also represent an important source of inspiration.

Our principal conclusion, in brief, is that regionalisation offers interesting prospects in the context of a flexibility strategy, but that in the Netherlands there has to date not been any suitable application of adequate control concepts. This is where the major challenges lie in the near future, not only for policy but also for associated research and development.

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[1] With thanks to Jan Geurts and Geert Kraayvanger for their comments on the draft version of this article.

Decentralisation, territory and vocational training policy

The social restructuring of production brought about by the decentralisation of large firms and the allocation of work to smaller production units has involved the emergence of a new spatial unit, the territory.
The territory becomes of key significance in redefining vocational training policy and as an area for action, discussion and bargaining between the social partners and local authorities ("microconcertation").

Introduction

This article seeks to draw attention to the emergence of the notion of space as one of the new, key factors in the formulation of vocational training policy. The territorial restructuring of production now under way calls for a flexible adjustment of the training facilities provided by local authorities to ensure that they adequately fulfil their purpose. In fact, decentralisation of production on a territorial basis has generated new partners and new areas for bargaining and decision-making for the two sides of industry and local authorities.

Following as it did on the crisis of Taylorism, the restructuring of the production system has led since the mid-seventies to a steady decline in the large industrial enterprise that has been described in various well-known works such as those of Sabel (1985) or Piore and Sabel (1990). At the same time, the idea that "small is beautiful" had been gaining ground because of small firms' advantages in terms of adjustability, adaptability and flexibility in the face of fluctuating demand or changes in terms of quantity and quality.

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The restructuring of the production process in large firms has followed the path of division of labour. The past twenty years or so have seen decentralisation gathering pace and services being subcontracted by large firms to smaller local units which utilise the networks of family, friends and neighbours. The result has been the creation of genuine local economies. The phenonomen is not really new. In the seventies Italian sociologists wrote about it using the generic term "diffused manufacture"[1] because of the increasingly blurred outline of major manufacturing companies. Subsequently they adopted the term, "industrial district" in the Marshallian sense of the term, which links industry to the local community (Becattini, 1989; Trigilia, 1989). French writers, on the other hand, preferred the terms "mobile factory" or "local industrial systems" so as to emphasise the existence of links with the community in the territory, as pointed out by Ganne (1991). Other writers preferred such evocative images as "constellation of firms", "conglomerates", "hand and head firms" etc.

In the case of Spain research is more recent and to a large extent influenced by the theoretical and conceptual framework of Italian and French sociologists. In the early eighties work began on a series of studies on the decentralisation of production and home working. The most notable contribution was the Sanchís' study of the toy, textile and footwear industry in the autonomous community of Valencia completed in 1981 and 1983. Subsequently Faustino Miguélez looked at the hidden economy in the textile industry in Catalonia with specific reference to one local community (1988). At the same time, J.J. Castillo (1989) studied the division of labour between firms in the furniture and electronics sector in Madrid. These were the principle lines of study, though not the only ones. Recent years have seen a proliferation of studies in this field both by academics and from government bodies and both sides of industry. Space does not permit us to go into detail here and we refer readers to the bibliography on the subject.

However, regardless of the various theoretical contexts and the terminology used, what is quite clear is that decentralisation is a genuine phenomenon associated with the social reorganisation of production in the sense that it mobilises human resources and skills in the immediate environment and revolutionises values, attitudes and behaviour. Indeed it has been observed that linking industry with the local community calls for a social structure involving a large number of small firms employing skilled and semi-skilled workers and a family structure providing the less skilled element.

In order to look more closely at the thesis of territoriality as a new factor affecting vocational training we shall structure our article around four points. Firstly we shall discuss the relationship between the division of labour between firms and the concept of territoriality as a specific, defined space. Secondly we shall deal with the sources of demand for training in a local context. We shall then discuss a case study illustrating our hypothesis before concluding with a number of reflections of a general nature.

Division of work between firms and territory

The new division of work between firms is defined and characterised by breaking down the production process and allocat-

ing the various tasks involved to a constellation of firms who, though legally independent, cooperate closely with one another. Cooperation may take two forms. This first is to divide the work of production between a large firm and group of small firms who work with one another in a cooperative network. The second form involves the division of labour between firms with a network of small firms that are legally independent but preserve a structural unity.

In both cases a fundamental feature is the separation between intellectual and manual work, which to some extent can be represented by two concepts: the centre and the periphery.

■ At the centre is the "head" which performs the intellectual task of designing the work process, planning and developing the product. This is where the higher qualifications are concentrated. Generally speaking this central head is a large firm, although this does not have to be the case; it may be a medium-sized or even a small firm. What is essential is that it controls access to the market, designs the product, coordinates the various tasks and maintains the links, rituals and rules necessary for cooperation. This is why such firms have been dubbed "strategic brokers".

■ At the periphery, on the other hand, is the place where the company's "hands" are located. These are firms which do the work requiring fewer skills but which is more labour-intensive. These firms merely carry out the instructions for work transmitted from the centre. As a result some authors have called this method "Territorially diffused Neotaylorism" (J.J. Castillo (1991)).

This new form of division of labour between firms is a genuine social structure that utilises the resources of its surroundings. Small firms work together in order to perform a specific, specialised stage of the production cycle. No firm is responsible for the whole production cycle. The small firms are located in a well-defined homogenous territory with their basis the local community, whose human resources they can draw on using the social networks of family, friends and neighbours.

These networks make it possible to exploit the cultural resources of the local community, particularly codes of conduct based on paternalism, loyalty and respect for authority figures, on the basis of a certain reciprocity and protection of employees' interests. These informal mechanisms make it possible to ensure flexibility with regard to variations in the production cycle, through flexible working hours, overtime, night shifts and special shifts at weekends. Another type of flexibility permitted by such social networks is temporary employment for specific tasks which may involve very short periods of employment by verbal agreement - two or three days or even a number of hours.

Qualifications and local community

On the basis of what has been said we can identify three sources of demand for training in the territory. However, we should start by pointing out that the structure of qualifications is not uniform but tends to be segmented and hierarchical. Thus the large firms at the centre tend to be the place where high, formal qualifications recognised by collective agreements tend to be found. Such firms usually have a training department, and career and promotion systems, as also a more or less clearly defined training policy. This to some degree guarantees maintenance of specific occupational skills.

However, the decision to decentralise production creates a new problem in the territory in that it also involves shifting the burden of training policy and organisation from the large firm or central unit to the small firms and, subsequently, to local authorities.

The reduction in the size of the large firms brought about by decentralisation and subcontracting frequently also involves a gradual reduction of investment in training of human resources, and even the closure of firms' own training departments[2]. This shifts the burden of responsibility for maintenance of qualifications on to the new users - the small local firms. Initially these firms seek to meet the need by an informal or "concealed" apprenticeship with older workers with experience in the large firms teaching the younger ones so as to ensure the uniform product and style of work required by the large firms with access to the market (the strategic brokers). However, in the long run the cost of this hidden training is high and becomes burdensome for the small firms, many of which are run on a family basis, with the result that they turn for help to local authorities and employers' associations in maintaining the required skill levels.

At the same time, the small firms establish a multiplicity of links with one another, creating sub-networks which are no longer necessarily under the control of the strategic brokers. These sub-networks cooperate flexibly to produce small batches of goods or services. They tend to cooperate with one another on the basis of reciprocity rather than compete on the open market as the neo-classicists would expect. However, managing the small firms generates new demand for specific training in the territory in which they are situated, generally in subjects such as management techniques, optimisation of resources, finance, cost/benefit analysis and skills in identifying and solving the problems involved in their particular activity. The guidelines for operating and organising cease to be standard ones related to the culture of the large firm. The functioning of small firms becomes very specific in that it requires a considerable background knowledge to cope with the different situations. What emerges here, therefore, is a need for medium-level training to enable the owners to manage and to solve particular problems of a technical nature within the firm[3].

In summary the territory and the local community become a new dimension for vocational training with local authorities confronted with a demand for training and ad hoc qualifications adapted to the specific needs of the territory. This calls for a training programme that is more flexible to suit local manufacturers' requirements.

Then again, we cannot ignore the fact that the local community also provides industry with certain "clandestine" qualifications when, for example, it mobilises certain skills or semi-skills in order to obtain certain levels of quality or certain products. One obvious example of this are the skills required to make ready-made clothing (being able to sew) which, as Sabel pointed out (1985: p. 79), tend to be possessed by women of a certain social environment. In other words the skills avail-

Chart I
Division of labour between firms: neotaylorism and flexible specialisation

Local community

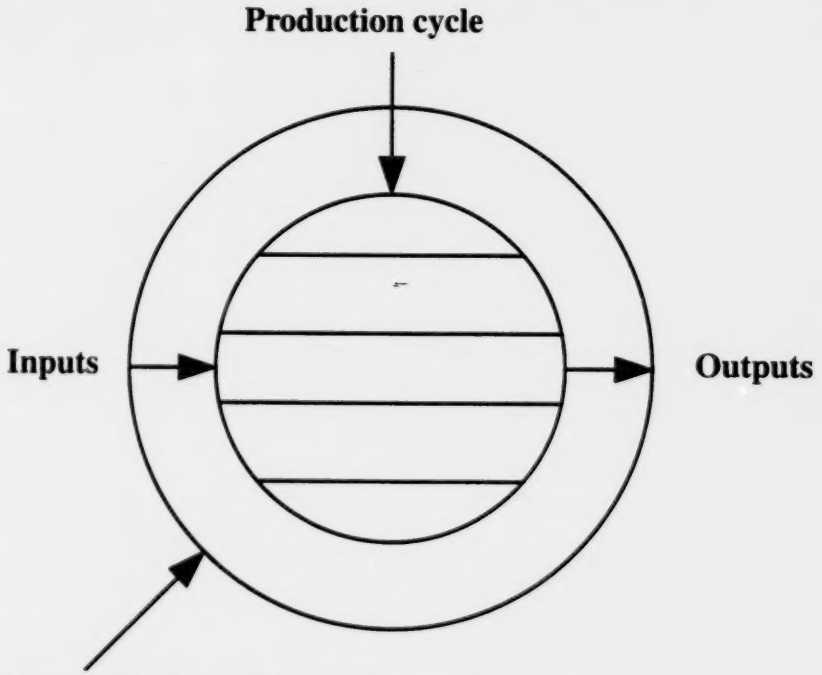
Local culture: Mobilisation of qualifications, exploiting networks of family, friends and neighbours.

Periphery
Small firms :

- Labour-intensive tasks
- Flexibility of working hours
- Flexible employment
- Informal labour relations
- Medium-level technology
- Low wage costs
- Craft qualifications and low qualifications

Centre
Large firms :

- Advanced technology
- Process automation
- High wage costs
- Unionisation
- Regulated labour relations
- Formalised but segmented qualifications
- Internal promotion



Rules governing division of labour between firms

- Stability and continuity
- Quality control
- Uniform quality and style of work
- Stable system of communications
- Advice/training/assistance

Source: A. Martin Artiles: Fordismo y Sindicalismo. El Projecto No.19-20, Barcelona 1993

able in the community can also help define jobs. Society influences the organisation of work in local industry, which in turn makes us aware of the existence of other variables when it comes to defining and producing training programmes for the territory.

Put otherwise: what we wish to emphasise is that technology is not a determining variable as far as work organisation and definition of occupational qualifications within the constellation of firms is concerned, but is subject to the "societal effect" (Maurice, Sellier, Silvestre, 1987). Rhe definition of jobs and work organisation cannot be dissociated from the interplay of socialisation and organisation. As a consequence the structure of qualifications will depend on how a firm conceives the socialisation of workers and the differentiation of tasks within its organisational ambit, the territory.

The case of a diffused firm and the acquisition of qualifications and skills

The experience of decentralisation of a leading multinational publishing firm will serve us as an example and provide us with a few specific pointers and hypotheses. At the beginning of the eighties the firm had around a thousand employees. Ten years later it only had about 600. By decentralisation of its more labour-intensive tasks (preparatory and finishing work) and by using subcontractors the firm has managed to create a network of 20 small firms that are legally independent but all subordinated to the same production cycle - which means a need for quality control and uniformity of product. In other words, levels of vocational training in the small firms on the periphery have to be constantly monitored in order to maintain a standard level of semi-finished and finished products, which in this case are books and large-circulation magazines.

The large firm or "head" organises the production cycle and has access to the market. However it has to maintain a certain corporate culture among the group of small firms scattered geographically around it. It thus needs general guidance in terms of methods, techniques, working pace, and product line and style. At the same time, it expects the smaller firms to observe a series of customs, standards and standard practices. It is these which give the diffused manufacturing company its structural unity.

Vocational training has played an important role in constructing the circle of small firms. In particular the large firm's vocational training school, which has provided training courses for the small-scale entrepreneurs and young apprentices. This umbilical cord of training has been important in ensuring a uniform method and style of working and guaranteeing a uniform quality and standard of products.

In the same way, the small firms have two or three older men who have experience of working at the large firm, which guarantees the style and quality of the product as well as maintaining the corporate culture, customs and working practices of the head. It is these older men, too, who teach the young trainees who are basically young people employed on a temporary basis who have not been through the central firm's vocational training school. However, the high rate of turnover in the workforces of the small firms calls for continuous and concentrated vocational training. During the eighties the training requirement was met by the large firm's vocational training school but when it was closed in 1989 the problem of maintaining qualifications was shifted to the small firms. How did these firms react to the problem of training? There are three comments worth making here:

(a) In the first place the owners of the small firms themselves began to give training in the evenings after finishing the day's work. To do this they set up an informal training school whose high costs in terms of materials, time and maintenance meant that it could only keep going for two years.

(b) In the second place they opened up the way for bargaining and dialogue at local level. In other words, territoriality emerges as an area of action for the firm owners, unions and local government[4].

(c) A third observation is that the owners of the small firms themselves need management training. These people are former employees of the large firm and generally former middle-managers with only technical training. They have little knowledge of management techniques or means of determining costs, which are only roughly calculated. They have no training in accounting or finance, they are unaware of official regulations and the requirements of labour law and are consequently not able to manage industrial relations. As a result many of them shut down after two or three years.

On the other hand, technological innovation, especially in the computer field, has brought with it a process of job downgrading and upgrading. Some jobs have lost their content as a result of automation, while others have been affected by the merging of tasks. Jobs which have tended to disappear are those of linotypist, make-ready operatives and art-work operatives. Thanks to the "Mackintosh revolution" these three jobs have been combined into one and have resulted in an upgrading of the old "first corrector" into a new job, "operative-designer".

PMT work has also been affected by the computer revolution. The fact that it is now possible to work with photos, drawing and colour on the same screen changes the work involved and to some degree reduces the content, while tending to eliminate the manual tasks.

Retraining is carried out on the job through demonstrations and short training courses given by the suppliers of the equipment concerned. The course is followed by a process of interactive learning during which the operative becomes better acquainted with the equipment and more skilled in the use of the software. However, the absence of any organised training system run by a recognised body and leading to an accepted qualification means that firms have to assess qualifications informally. Generally speaking they use three indicators - the number of errors in a job, the time taken to carry it out, and the percentage of tasks within a job specification which an operative is able to perform. Thus reduction of the number of errors and a decrease in the time needed to perform a task are signs that a trainee is acquiring greater skill, while the worker's category is based on his ability to carry out a certain number of tasks within a job.

However, the system of informal training used because of the lack of vocational

Training, work organization and territorial effects: the case of a motor vehicle supplier

Against the background of the changes in skills and work in a firm in the Vosges, the article outlines the links which the company is forging in the restructuring of its relationship to local employment and training structure. The firm has to cope with new qualification and skill needs whilst restructuring its organization which initially had a Taylorist character. This was based on tapping the workforce in a crisis area and coping with the operational constraints of Kan Ban. Preferring to adapt rather than replace its workforce, it is restructuring its training policy around greater involvement in the local continuing training infrastructure, and participation in the development of new skill generation paths and the redefinition of the characteristics of the local workforce.

The interest in on-the-job training has partly been prompted by the major changes in work organization. In the repair/assembly shops, new work constraints are emerging which lead to the restructuring of human resources management. The case presented here was studied within the framework of research undertaken by CEDEFOP in 1992 entitled "The role of the company in the process of skill generation - formal continuing vocational training and the training impact of work organization".

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The case which served as the basis for our study is the French subsidiary of an American group, which came to the Vosges in 1979 and makes turbo-compressors for the European motor vehicle market. This is, above all, a sub-contracting company which has to meet requirements both in terms of deadlines and quality. This firm manufactures some of the parts (classical mechanical work: machine finishing and boring ...) and is responsible for the final assembly of turbo-compressors for the motor vehicle industry. It has a differentiated market both in respect of the range of products it offers and the number of its clients.

Today, against the background of an ongoing employment crisis, it seems important to examine the link between the major changes in work in companies and the local economic infrastructure in respect of qualification and employment. The case of this firm lends itself to an initial approach and an initial examination of the link between new forms of work organization, on-the-job skill generation and the structure of a local labour market. More particularly our attention focused on one precise point: the impact of the developments in internal structures within the company on the link between training and employment.

Chronical of an announced change: an employment area in crisis

a) An employment area in crisis

The firm concerned has been set up in a rural area in the process of industrial exodus. So far, it was the textile industry which shaped the employment area in which this firm has set itself up. The crisis coupled with the more or less total disappearance of the textile industry has led to public efforts to encourage the creation of new production opportunities in the region, mainly by way of the Vosges Plan accompanied by forms of public assistance in the setting up of new businesses.

Today, the economy in the employment area benefits from nearby Epinal. The site at which the firm is located is the only one in Vosges today which does not have a negative migratory balance. Unemployment continues to be high given the continuing crisis in the textile industry even if the industrial landscape is changing given the arrival of new companies.

b) The employment area: employment prospects (qualification and specialization)

As far as job prospects are concerned, the structure of the workforce is characterized by the special features of the prevailing textile industry: high level of female employment (42% of women in the employment area were in active employment in 1982[2]), a large proportion of unskilled workers in the overall working population (23%[3]) to which is linked the high average age of the population which, in turn, reflects the lasting nature of the socio-economic situation.

Having decided to set itself up in this region, the firm can tap the industrial workforce which has the necessary assembly skills. The firm is based on a Taylorist system and has been quick to draw on the available female and unskilled workforce. Its needs are also met by recruiting young staff.

The effects of decentralisation

Centre
Strategy of large firms

Restructuring
Automation, technological innovation, new forms of work organisation.

Generates:
Demand for training and retraining
Demand for flexibility (internal mobility and multiskilling).

Decentralisation of production innovation.

- Rendering the production cycle more flexible by a division of labour between firms.
- Exploiting social links (family and friends)
- Exploiting the cultural resources of the environment (qualifications, manual skills, trade skills etc.),

Periphery
Decentralisation/territory

Identification of sources of demand for training in the territory

1. Via efforts to control quality of and standardise products and ensure product uniformity.
   Hidden training controlled by large firms.
2. Demand for training as a result of technical aims at:
3. Demand for medium-level training for the managers of small firms.
4. Demand for training for maintenance of skills forming part of the local culture (trade skills, manual skills etc.)

Challenge for local authorities: Microconcertation
"Adjust the supply of training to the nature of local demand"
(a) local economic development
(b) commercial development
(c) promotion of institutions providing technological advice and training
(d) promoting specific training within the territory
(e) local regulation of working conditions: microconcertation.

training schools gives rise to disagreements and even disputes between the social partners involving claims for recognition of job categories by the labour authorities. Informal training also impedes mobility and promotion of workers within the firm because of the lack of formal certification by a recognised institution.

Conclusions

Both this case and others described in the literature show the importance of territory as a means of redefining vocational training policy, making it more flexible and adapting it to the pace of technological innovation or organisational change. Particularly continuing training and occupational training can contribute substantially to making available training courses more flexible, since training within the educational system tends to be more rigid.

Moreover, the territory is becoming an area for action, dialogue and bargaining between the social partners and local authorities, not only in matters concerned with vocational training but also from the point of view of development policy, promotion of technological innovation and fostering enterprise. In other words, territory is becoming an area for "microconcertation". The ultimate significance of the trend towards territorialisation is linked to the old problem of relating the economy and society: diffused industry with a local social system.

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1) See the summary of the discussion given by Carmen González: "La fábrica difusa en Quaderni del territori", Madrid, Revista Sociología del Trabjo, No. 5, 1981.

2) See, for example, the case of a large steelmaking firm studied by Andreu Lope and Pilar Carrasquer (1991).

3) This is precisely one of the problems of the small workers cooperatives and firms. A study carried out by the Ministry of Labour points out that the lack of professional management skills in such firms is made up for by sacrifices and long working hours, if the firm is not actually obliged to shut down. Only 35% of managers of cooperatives have had a primary education, which means that in most cases the firm is managed by a leader with charisma but no training.

The number of cooperatives and small craft firms is very important. It is estimated that there are some 9 500 cooperatives with more than 150 000 employees and about 6 900 small craft firms with 84 500 workers. This places Spain in second place after Italy in the European social economy league (El País, 10 November 1993).

4) In another case study concerning the textile industry in a district of Catalonia we saw the result of territorialisation of activity by the social partners in the form of a centre (the Centre of Applied Technology of Vallés, CTAV) specialising in advising on technological innovation and the provision of specific vocational training for the firms. This case illustrates the importance of a flexible vocational training offer.

The firm: a challenging of the foundations of work organization

a) The firm after ten years' operation

Today, it has a staff of just over 700, most of whom are relatively young: 460 were younger than 35 in 1992.

In 1988 the firm decided to introduce a new form of organization in order to better meet the needs emerging from the introduction of management based on Kan Ban. This organization was to help to improve the functioning of the firm working on the basis of three 8-hour production shifts by means of functional services which operated not only during the day, and also to meet the constraints imposed by just-in-time deliveries.

The former work organization based on a classical division of labour has been reorganized on the basis of three main ideas: the design of internal organization enabling production to pull along all other services; the restructuring of human resources management around the redefinition of different tasks, functions and a multiskilling project; the gradual introduction of Kan Ban which marks the disappearance of classical production scheduling, the introduction of client-supplier links for each small and medium-sized enterprise[4], and the disappearance of intermediate stocks and much of specialized maintenance.

b) The structure of the firm's workforce

Today, the structure of the workforce is characterized by organizational change (relative reduction of middle management and junior staff, technicians and supervisors compared with blue-collar workers) and the initial characteristics of the firm's workforce, made up in part of female staff and unskilled white-collar workers.

The fluctuation mainly concerns the junior staff, technicians and supervisors, whereas the local economic context leads to the less qualified staff (blue-collar workers) becoming more stable in the structure which does not challenge from the outset the extension of production work.

It has been shown, in fact, that the local employment difficulties were not neutral in respect of the feeling of relative security which salaried staff had. Hence, the relatively low level of remuneration in production does not seem to be sufficient to encourage them to leave.

c) Accompanying change : the role of training

The direct consequences of change in work are without doubt the suppression of the occupation of setting-up technician, the integration of first-line maintenance tasks (mainly lubrication and simple breakdowns) into the work of operators, and the development of their multi-skills. All this changes the profile of practical skills. They are extended to take in management flow, quality as well as an ability to intervene in the production process for first-line maintenance and simplified setting-up tasks.

The firm's decision to retrain rather than replace its workforce rather by calling on the labour market is without doubt linked to the characteristics of the local workforce.

This raises two questions for the firm:

- How to adapt, via work organization, the skills of its workforce to the declared needs of the firm?
- How to mobilize external resources by drawing on the local and regional training network?

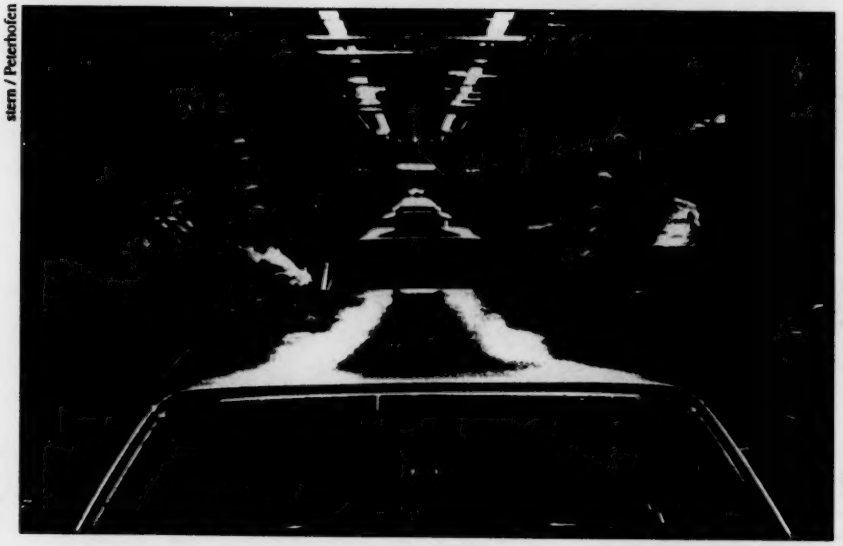
The apprenticeship process is based on three elements:

- training in simplified setting-up techniques, programming of CN tools having been assigned to repair shop technicians;
- on-the-job apprenticeship, generally with an older setting-up technician who has become, or is in the process of becoming, a repair shop technician;
- formalization of setting-up protocols in "specifications" formalizing the previous skills of the setting-up technician attached to the machine and which can be consulted by every operator.

Two major dimensions appear in the new skills resulting from organizational change.

The first is without doubt the organization of multi-skilling. It has two goals: to ensure that every operator within the same team can assume every work post in the production sector; and to ensure that he will be able to function in the posts in another production section. This is organized by doubling up with an experienced operator and takes up individual multi skilling concerns. Points are awarded with a view to determining the classification coefficient as operators learn the different machines. During the annual interviews, the individual multi-skilling programme is established for the forthcoming year with the team head.

The second concerns the question of quality and quality control for which the opera-



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tors are henceforth responsible. This implies: knowledge and application of quality control (control cards), frequently making tool changes without any disruptions in line with the rhythm of the production series; participation in the management of the cutting tool machine park; the obligation to organize one's own time. This individual time management at the workplace becomes a central dimension of work with regard to flow management on a team level. It is this aspect which is seen as the most enriching by operators.

The new work dimensions for operators are accompanied by training policies. Examination of the social balance for 1991 shows that training efforts are oriented towards skilled white- and blue-collar workers.

The priorities have been fixed: to increase technical skills linked to the development of a machine park and multi-skilling; to develop skills in production management; to offer training linked with the firm's total quality programme (SPC - statistical process control); to upgrade the skills of those without qualifications by preparing them to take a CAP (certificate of vocational aptitude) by means of credit units, a scheme which led to the acquisition of a diploma by the twelve of the members of staff who took part.

Manfred Vollmer

Some of the plan receives public funding via the commitment to develop training signed by UIMM (Union of Mining and Metalworking Industries). In this way the firm was able to refinance 30% of the most significant additional activities in the fields mentioned above.

Recourse is made to local and regional training facilities mainly in connection with the preparation of training contents. Most of the practical training courses are assigned to external bodies, mainly to GRETA (group of educational establishments) and a training body linked to the chamber of the metalworking industry. However, the work on contents is undertaken in advance by the firm together with the trainers who will be involved in order to make sure that production needs are met. In general, the starting point is the framework for national education certificates (e.g. CAP - certificate of vocational aptitude). This framework is then adapted to the special features of the product or machine.

Secondly, this also involves the involvement of the firm in the development of the initial training infrastructure. The firm itself is committed to the process of developing occupational baccalauréats by taking trainees who are preparing to sit an occupational baccalauréat in maintenance in the Vosges region. To this end, it has set up a didactic area within its repair shops. The managerial staff run some courses on quality and logistics.

The development of schemes of this kind, e.g. involvement in education by means of training along the lines of the occupational baccalauréat, affects the local training system. Involvement in existing paths also means working towards developing new training paths. The people who receive training in conjunction with the occupational baccalauréat for maintenance will not necessarily join the firm's staff.

The question which is directly raised has to do with the attractive role of this training for young people in this employment area. A question still to be answered has to do with whether the presence of workers trained in numerical control and in the constraints of just-in-time production could serve as encouragement to firms which are thinking of setting up in this employment area.

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The local employment system and the workforce management policy

If the changes are sufficiently clear within the firm, this is by no means the case outside the firm. The very nature of this movement implies a repositioning of the firm in the local environment. Several questions could be raised:

a) The first concerns the **contradiction in the link between the company and the local area in the management of the workforce**, with regard to the question of mobility and the privatization of know-how by the firm.

How could a specific classification system tailored to the need for recognition of internal multi-skilling affect the local employment situation? The special nature of formal training, the systematic comparability with the sector qualification grid uniquely by means of the coefficient leads to difficulties in cases of external mobility. Hence, it is the case that some operators stress that they are simple operators on their pay sheets and mention the likely difficulty of having their qualification recognized outside.

Should the firm enter an employment crisis this problem will become very concrete. The staff would be unable to benefit on the labour market from the skills they have acquired and the know-how privatized by the firm. Could the new path towards certification along the lines of an "occupational baccalauréat" be the solution? The problem of external validization of internal know-how is linked with recognition of the firm's training policy as a pilot training project for other firms in the sector who have come to this employment area. The participation of the firm in local training structures, its active role in training processes in the employment area, as well as its partnership relationships with other firms in the sector, are ways of moving towards that validation.

b) The second question has to do with **recruitment** and raises the problem of the development in skills in the employment area. The constraints today on work have brought the firm to view the BEP (diploma of occupational studies) as the standard requirement for the recruitment of operators. In fact, given the lack of career prospects, the holders of higher levels of certificates are finding it difficult to get jobs. The new repair shop technicians are mainly former supervisors or team heads. This shows us the structure of staff broken down by training levels in 1992: 19% of various levels (CEP (vocational training certificate), no training, or CAP in a non-mechanical field), 48% with CAP or BEP (mechanical engineering, electrical engineering), 13% with a baccalauréat and 20% holders of a certificate higher than baccalauréat.

Industrial development in the employment area no doubt marks a move from a qualification-based structure to one based on new rules. The basic skills required for recruitmentt can only be acquired if the necessary facilities are available on the spot. In the past skills could be acquired on-the-job via practical experience in line with Taylorist rules of work organization (repetition of highly formalized tasks). Today, in organizations of this kind these rules will develop towards formal training processes in which apprenticeship will no longer be a matter of induction in the work to be undertaken and in which knowing how to act will become a main feature of the work activities and the levels of certificates required in respect of recruitment. The opportunities for the firm to mobilize this capacity for qualification and education, both in terms of time and costs, thus depend greatly on the existence of these learning structures able to produce the required skills. This could also constitute a greater opportunity for the use of measures such as qualification contracts.

c) Partnership

If the organization of mobility is not yet a major problem for the firm, it could, in the long term, become an issue: increase in the average age of a population which is not very mobile in an employment area in which job prospects are poor, a structure which is currently stable but which could raise problems in the case of crisis. That is why a policy of business spin-offs has been introduced. Furthermore, the prospect of the departure of skilled workers towards sub-contractors, of whom gradually the same demands will be made in terms of quality and just-in-time, will be encouraged as long as their remuneration policies are compatible.

Thus, partnership seems to be one solution given the potential for malfunctioning which a system of this kind has: the problems of mobility on the one hand, the question of training on the other. In order to deal with the mobility problems, the hypothesis is advanced of coordination of the most active firms in an employment area in order to create a skilled labour market. This offers the opportunity for the recognition of skills acquired within the employment area and also increases the opportunity for external mobility of the workforce within that area. As far as the problem of training is concerned, partnership enables redistribution of training costs and opportunity costs linked to the departure of trained staff to other companies. But it also means influence can be exerted on the local training structures by elaborating and disseminating a training model involving investment in the local and regional continuing training infrastructure.

The question of the dissemination of a training model and the creation of a labour market should be viewed against the background of the arrival of new firms with more or less the same characteristics. Together, these firms will influence the local dynamics and the rules of the employment system thereby modifying the very structure of the skills and qualifications in an employment area which is still in a period of crisis.

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[1] I would like to thank the heads of the firm involved in the survey for the remarks which they made as a contribution to this article.

[2] **D. Ansieau and O. Ribon.** "Population : l'empreinte du passé", Economie Lorraine, No. 65, February 1988, pp. 4-5

[3] ibid. p. 5

[4] In the terminology used by the firm these are units which bring together the different sections of production, the functions "quality and maintenance" and also the short-term function "methods".

Vocational training and regions: changes in categories of interpretation and types of action

How can we identify training needs on the basis of the categories of interpretation offered by regional economics?

This article reports on two Italian experiments with vocational training strategies taking account of the training needs of a specific area: a venture in the province of Bologna and a venture in Carpi (a small Commune in the province of Modena).

In order to understand the purpose of these ventures, promoted by a number of partners in these areas of different size, it is important to place them in the context of the changing categories used to interpret the economy. A new economic discipline, called regional economics in the United States, has grown up alongside macro-economic and business economic analysis.

This discipline studies entrepreneurial routes in an area from the point of view of their overall constraints and potential, taking account of their past and attempting to find out about their possible development. The categories of interpretation offered by regional economics and the questions that they raise are essential for any scientific examination of the relationships between vocational training and regions tackled in this special issue of the CEDEFOP Bulletin.

The theoretical traditions on which regional economics is based combine various strands (historical, economic, sociological, geographical, etc.) whose common aim is to explain the socio-economic development of a particular area. A wide range of authors writing at different times and including Alfred Marshall, Fernand Braudel, Karl Polanyi, Albert Hirschman, Nathan Rosenberg, David Noble, etc., have played a key part in introducing more complex categories of interpretation into the more traditional types of technological and industrial development analysis; these categories make explicit reference to the regional and social context in which a given entrepreneurial route, a given technological innovation or a given type of industrial development takes place.

Authors who have helped to shape the discussion of these topics in Italy include Charles Sabel and Michael Piore, *The Second Industrial Divide* (1984), and Charles Sabel and Jonathan Zeitlin, *Historical Alternative to Mass Production. Politics, Markets and Technology in Nineteenth Century Industrialization* (1985). Italian theoretical work on this type of analysis includes the Italian articles contained in two anthologies: M. Maruani, E. Reynaud, C. Romani, *La flexibilité en Italie*, Syros, Paris 1989; F. Pyke, G. Becattini, W. Sengenberger (eds.), *Industrial Districts and Inter-firm Cooperation in Italy*, ILO, Geneva, 1990.

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Adele Pesce, in her report *Un'altra Emilia Romagna* (Equal Opportunities Commission of the Emilia Romagna Region, Franco Angeli, Milan, 1990), has made an important contribution to the interpretation of socio-economic development from the point of view of gender.

What are the main conceptual networks of regional economics and why are they so important in understanding the relationship between vocational training and regions? For simplicity, we have classified them under six headings.

Different types of industrialization

Traditional economic analysis focuses in particular on major multinational enterprises and the industrialization routes linked to these enterprises. Regional economics, focusing on the development of various regions of Europe, the United States and Japan, has shown that industrialization is not shaped solely by the mass production techniques employed by major enterprises, which used the methods of Taylor and Ford in the past and are now tending to make increasing use of Toyotist methods. Other types of industrialization focus on specialist flexible production (products produced in small runs or where a part of the product is customized for a particular purchaser) taking place in subsystems of small and medium-sized enterprises and requiring labour to be organized in a way that promotes greater cooperation between technical management and skilled workers.

In a region, account should not therefore be taken solely of large multinational en-

terprises using mass production techniques; specialist industrialization routes based on small runs and so on, also need to be examined since their organization differs from that of multinational enterprises; they may also be a technologically viable alternative to large multinational industry.

Relationship between types of industrialization and training systems

Finding out about the impact of the various types of industrialization on national and regional choices as regards the organization of the training system is an important aspect.

Mass production based on the methods of Taylor and Ford disseminated a model of industrialization within which limited numbers of specialist high-level technicians were felt to be adequate to organize large areas of unskilled manual work. In nations such as the United States this type of labour organization in large factories had an impact on the training system, leading people to think that more importance should be attached to high-level university and post-university education and less to training in lower-level skills. This has had evident results: while these elites are being trained, very high percentages of boys and girls attending American high schools in the poorest areas of cities leave school unqualified without even being able to read or write.

The changes in organizational methods that the spread of Toyotism (the name, as we know, derives from Taiichi Ohno's 1949-50 experiments at Toyota) has brought about in large industry in Japan have made manual workers more responsible for an output which, although mass produced, allows the purchaser to choose between many variants (i.e. flexible production). Making workers more responsible has disseminated a training system model making it important to obtain diplomas or equivalent qualifications with an average level of technical and scientific knowledge (in Japan, 95% of the new generations obtain a diploma or equivalent qualification and international comparisons show that Japanese students obtain higher than average scores in mathematics and science tests).

The importance of developing technical and scientific knowledge halfway between initial and university qualifications is even more crucial from the point of view of the model of flexible specialist industrialization. Achieving specialist output for the purchaser (for instance special machines) entails very close cooperation between technical management and a skilled workforce that needs to attend training prior to work which can be built on by skills acquired at work.

The regions in which flexible specialist industrialization is most developed (for instance the Emilia Romagna region in Italy) are therefore also those regions with the largest numbers of high-level technical schools awarding technical diplomas and providing training for the middle managers needed for this type of production. Developing flexible specialist industrialization in its various forms in a given region immediately makes it necessary to raise the question of the type of intermediate technical schools that need to be located in the region.

The very different routes of technological innovation

In traditional economic analysis, technological innovation is largely connected with the major private or public research centres and its most immediate results: products for the military and aerospace economy and for industry. Regional economic considerations point in two other directions.

In the first place, technological innovation is not just seen from the point of view of the basic innovation (for instance the discovery of the transistor in the Bell Telephone Company's laboratories in 1947) but from the point of view of all the advances that build on this basic innovation. Rosenberg, in order to explain the various implications of technological innovation, puts forward a curious table in which, looking at the most highly industrialized nations, he relates the percentage of Nobel prizes obtained in scientific disciplines from the war to the 1980s to increases in gross national product in the 1970s and 1980s. While the correlation is very high, it is negative as Japan has had some of the highest increases in GNP but has also received a very low percentage of Nobel prizes, while nations such as the United Kingdom have received a high percentage of Nobel prizes but have not had high GNP increases (with the United States somewhere between the two). Rosenberg uses this table to show that while basic technological innovation is concentrated in the major research centres of some European and American regions, substantial increases in economic development can be achieved, as in the case of Japan, through expertise in transferring and applying the results of these innovations.

This argument is borne out by regional economics. The introduction, within the disparate fabric of enterprises of a region, of technological process, product and organizational innovations does not require university or private research centres researching major basic innovations to be located in this region. Establishing centres to mediate and transfer technological innovations with links with the training system and the system of enterprises is enough (although this is no easy matter) to change the coordinates of this development.

The different ways in which enterprises combine and relate

Traditional economic analysis places considerable emphasis on the differences within the major industrial groups, stressing the movement towards macroenterprise networks which may take different forms (Japanese macroenterprise networks are for instance differentiated from the types of networks most widespread in Europe and the United States). This has provided a perception of small and medium-sized enterprises as a comparable whole and has led to the formulation of EC programmes and national industrial policies for small and medium-sized enterprise.

If we examine small and medium-sized enterprises using the categories provided by regional economics, it is evident that smaller enterprises are very different from one another in terms of two main characteristics. The differing technological complexity of products and the processing that they entail is obviously a first characteristic. There is, however, a further characteristic - the links that the various types of small enterprise have with other enterprises. Small enterprises may be part of a district or an urban industrial subsystem (forming a network of subcontractors or selling their own products on the market);

they may also be part of a network of subcontractors of a major enterprise; they may undertake processing or produce products without being part of a district, an urban industrial subsystem or a subcontracting network of a major enterprise.

It is important to take account of these differences because it is necessary, if it is wished to offer a range of services, consultancy, business training and employee training to small and medium-sized enterprises in a region, to identify which of these groups relate to small enterprises.

The term district was coined by Alfred Marshall and has been introduced into the Italian debate by the economist Giacomo Becattini. The term district can be used when a specific local context is characterized by one predominant type of output produced by a group of small and medium-sized enterprises, some producing for the market and others undertaking processing work for third parties, with a very flexible demarcation line between these two groups and a relatively low level of competition between enterprises in the district in comparison with the competition that these enterprises have to face outside the district. One of the two cases examined in this article relates to a particular district (the Carpi knitwear district in the province of Modena) and provides an idea of the type of vocational training action that seems most appropriate.

Larger areas may contain several concentrations of production, and when these concentrations of small and medium-sized enterprises are organized as districts, it is possible to speak of urban industrial subsystems; this is the situation of the second case that we examined.

Labour supply and training supply: different for men and women

Within a regional economy it is not enough to look at the organization of enterprises and the industrialization routes contained in a particular region. It is necessary to look in parallel at the components making up the labour supply, taking male-female differences in the various study-work routes, in the ways in which knowledge is passed on, in the different impact that men and women have had on technological and business choices and in the dynamics of family businesses as an essential point of reference.

In traditional economic analysis, the labour supply, like the training supply, is seen as a variable subordinate to the industrial and economic choices of a particular area and gender differences are seen at most as one of the many variables to be kept under control. It is traditionally considered that the labour demand is the central reference point shaping individuals and school and vocational training facilities in this area. The objective of responsible regional economic analysis is (a) to upgrade the overall quality of the labour supply by making the most of the different options open to women and men, (b) to upgrade the training supply by dispensing with traditionally reductive schemes which separate routes for women from routes for men and (c) to upgrade the labour demand, while aware that in very many cases enterprises are unable to perceive changes in the medium term and that investment in research and development and in vocational training may be one of the first areas to suffer cuts in periods of recession such as the current period.

It should be borne in mind, therefore, that action within a regional economic policy has to take account not only of individuals but also of enterprises and suppliers of training. Paying attention to the distinction between men and women is important not just because men's and women's choices of training, work and business routes differ, but also because making the most of gender differences may substantially modify the training supply which is often based on stereotypes that can be modified, as will be seen in second case examined.

The role of vocational training: to strengthen existing training routes and open up new entrepreneurial routes

A regional economic policy does not solely entail identifying consolidated industrial routes and therefore the training needed to strengthen what already exists. An important aspect of regional economics is to disseminate training routes likely to stimulate new entrepreneurial routes. Research or action in a region cannot therefore take account solely of the knowledge and information (on labour supply, training supply and labour demand) already available in this region. We have to know about the most innovative entrepreneurial routes of other regions and nations and find out whether these routes are in keeping with the potential of the region in question. This comparison provides a basis for deciding not only whether to consolidate existing entrepreneurial routes, but also whether to transfer new knowledge by reforming the training system and the structure of the business services operating in this particular region.

Vocational training therefore has to be part of a medium-term training strategy playing an active part in establishing new entrepreneurial routes. This is one of the interesting aspects of the second case examined.

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A vocational training project in an industrial district of a small Commune

The first case considered is that of a vocational training project to identify training needs in a particular area containing an industrial district.

This case involves the area of Carpi, a small Commune in the province of Modena, which has long had an industrial tradition (producing straw hats which were sold at the beginning of this century in branches in New York, London, Paris and Bangkok) and which, after the war, used these existing commercial networks to develop flexible knitwear production meeting customer requirements.

In order to consolidate this entrepreneurial route, the Emilia Romagna region, via ERVET (the regional development agency), established the CITER centre (Textile Information Centre of Emilia Romagna) in 1990 using public and private capital (the centre was set up through a partnership between ERVET and industrial associations, small enterprises and craft enterprises) in order to update the district's technology by promoting techniques of labour organization which were more up-to-date and introducing computer-aided design into the district for knitwear patterns and colour designs.

The CITER centre has made it possible for a large proportion of enterprises in the district to produce ready-to-wear knitwear, minimizing the time between new fashion styles and the production of the product by enterprises in the district.

The need to give the district a more up-to-date image as regards its training needs led a number of partners (three textile and clothing union confederations, the "Carpi formazione" vocational training centre which coordinated the project and craft and small enterprise associations) to join together in 1993 on an EEC Force project in which ISFOL (the Ministry of Labour's vocational training research facility) acted as a national link point and which involved a twinning with a research and training centre in Spain (FOREM in Madrid) and the Spanish union associations Federacion Textil e Piel-CC.OO which have undertaken to carry out the same research project in an area of Madrid.

The first research report on the district's training needs, entitled *Developments in qualifications and training needs in the knitwear and tailoring sectors of the textile-clothing industry*, was published at the end of 1993 and reached the interesting conclusion that the occupational profiles demanded by small and medium-sized enterprises were all consolidated profiles connected largely with production rather than occupational profiles relating to entrepreneurs needing to be able to cope with almost anything or the various technical and executive profiles.

If training is to play an active role, it must therefore change the attitudes of enterprises so that they introduce more skills of a managerial and organizational type and expand the management area. During a period of economic recession it is obvious that enterprises tend to reduce costs by seeking those occupational profiles most closely linked to production on the labour market.

The interest of this research project lies in the involvement of different partners (public training agencies, trade unions, entrepreneurs' associations) in connection with the parallel structures of a different region of a different nation. This exchange of experience should not only provide specific technical pointers as regards the potential content of the various occupational profiles needed, but also key information enabling advances to be made in medium-term strategies actively involving enterprises (i.e. not only focusing on individuals and the training supply) in the region.

An education and vocational training project to support existing industrial subsystems and promote new entrepreneurial routes in a province

The second case examined relates to the Commune of Bologna's school reform plans and covers a much larger area than in the previous case.

The Commune of Bologna's schools include two technical schools (linked to vocational schools) which form part of the city's training tradition: the Aldini and Valeriani Technical (and Vocational) School which celebrates its 150th anniversary in 1994 and the Sirani Women's Technical School (attached to a vocational school for services and advertising) which will celebrate its 100th anniversary in 1995.

These two schools offer very clear examples of men's and women's routes. Girls could not attend the Aldini and Valeriani school which concentrated on industry and even today, although there is no legal barrier, the vast majority of pupils attending the courses in electronics, mechanical engineering, etc., are boys. The Sirani school concentrating on social services, advertising and clothing sector skills was set up as a single-sex school for girls and even today, although it has a few male students, the vast majority of pupils are girls.

The Commune of Bologna commissioned the author to prepare a report on the city's training needs and to evaluate the ways in which these and other public-sector schools in the city as well as vocational training could be reformed. The research was carried out by the company Links of Bologna (and coordinated by Adele Pesce) and the report was published in 1993 (Commune of Bologna, *Sinergie per un sistema formativo integrato* [Synergies for an integrated training system], report edited by V. Capecchi).

What type of research route proved necessary and what conclusions did the report reach?

The starting point was to find out about the most important entrepreneurial routes used by industry in the Bologna area. Existing research made it possible to pinpoint those industrial subsystems of most importance today and from these it was possible to define a set of proposals for specialist training and business services related to the various subsystems within the mechanical engineering industry (the province's main industry) and the other industries in the area (construction, clothing, arts and crafts, etc.).

The report proposed the immediate launch of post-secondary vocational training

courses in order to support the subsystem of small and medium-sized enterprises producing automatic machinery for metering, packaging and wrapping as well as other proposals relating to other traditional routes in the Bologna area.

Identifying innovative training routes intended to stimulate new entrepreneurial skills was a more complex issue. In order to identify these routes, account was taken of the limits of entrepreneurial culture in Bologna, the potential of the training supply, some elements of the city's overall culture and innovative and successful entrepreneurial routes in other areas and nations.

It was discovered that entrepreneurial culture in Bologna is limited by the excessive importance attached to practices of an industrial type in industry. The development of flexible specialist industry has been very successful in Bologna and has led to the design, production and export of machinery for metering, packaging and wrapping, customized for various types of customer and with a very wide range of industrial uses (ranging from machinery for the foodstuffs industry, tea production, etc., to machinery for the pharmaceuticals, tobacco and cosmetics industries).

This type of production is now moving away from predominantly mechanical machinery to electronic machinery entailing changes in training routes as mentioned above. The success of this industrial subsystem has, however, distracted attention from other possible entrepreneurial routes with the same level of technological complexity, such as electronic and computer products for hospitals and health care, for people with handicaps and difficulties in coping with daily life, for environmental protection and so on.

The two schools of the Commune of Bologna are typical in that they offer a predominantly male route involving the study of machinery for industry and a predominantly female route focusing on social services, advertising, possible teaching routes, etc., providing little scope for electronic and computer applications.

This leads to a kind of self-limitation of the training system as regards entrepreneurial routes which take account of the possible synergies arising from a combination of the teaching passed on separately in the different schools. Pupils attending the industrial technical school are not taught about the applications of electronic expertise to apparatus other than that immediately linked to the industrial system (no information is given on the use of electronics in apparatus for the health system or intended to make the handicapped more independent, etc.) just as computing is taught only from the point of view of business applications and not, for instance, the design of teaching software and so on.

In parallel, the options taught in the women's technical school, although providing a substantial amount of information leading to skills in social and cultural services, do not include electronic and computing skills which could strengthen these entrepreneurial working routes which otherwise run the risk of being seen as "weak" in comparison with the "stronger" male routes.

The new entrepreneurial routes for a city such as Bologna were therefore identified as a combination of the technological skills contained in the male and female study routes applied to the various areas of daily life (health care, autonomy of handicapped people, environmental protection, multimedia teaching products, etc.). This was felt to be in keeping both with the overall culture of a city such as Bologna which has long been sensitive to social problems and with developments in industrially sophisticated areas in Europe, Japan and the United States where these entrepreneurial routes are proving to be very successful.

In a given area, it is therefore possible to propose not only ways of strengthening existing entrepreneurial routes by improving the organization of training and guidance for the labour supply but also of identifying new entrepreneurial routes which make the most of the differences between men and women and provide the foundations for the organization of a network of services to business and an active training supply for the enterprise system.

dpa/Reeh

Vocational training and regional development
Brief retrospective

The link between the management of human resources in a territorial area and the socio-economic policies which affect it has always been a concern of CEDEFOP. Since its creation this has been a subject of study, reflection and intra-community dialogue for CEDEFOP.

Whether the area is viewed as an industrial site, a rural area, an employment zone or an administrative region the fundamental question remains the same. It is twofold: how should development strategies orient their activities towards local skill resources? How should training provision be tailored according to the rhythm and conditions of local development?

In a short retrospect on the work of CEDEFOP, Maria Pierret, project co-ordinator for several years, throws some light on the various aspects of these two fundamental questions.

Training and local development

"Vocational training and local development", it was under this heading that the subject of this bulletin took on importance at a time when the first work programme of CEDEFOP was being written, roughly one year after the creation of the centre in February 1975. At that time, as today, serious ruptures in economic developments and their main consequence, unemployment, were badly hitting groups at various sites, zones, territories, regions, adding further difficulties to those linked with the uneven rhythm of economic development in Europe. To counteract this trend, ERDF (European Fund for Regional Development) was set up in 1975. The aim was to ward off the emergence of gaps in standards of living between people in one and the same community. The attention given to the "local level", local authorities, projects, local actors is to be seen against the background of the overall social and economic strategies to deal with the phenomena of recession and check their development. By turning towards the "local", the strategists of the future were looking for job reservoirs and, as yet, untapped potential for the creation of employment.

Maria Pierret

Coordinator of CEDEFOP work, particularly work on the vocational training of women and vocational training limited to territorial development.

Between 1975 and 1985 there was a flood of theoretical work, experiments and initiatives linked to the subject of training and development. Regional authorities were given legislative powers and the financial resources to organize continuing, sometimes initial, vocational training more in line with the needs of the local communities. Several associations are created to fulfil a development function, incorporating training into partnership with the various local levels. In 1978 the Advisory Committee for Local and Regional Authorities of the Member States of the European Community, now the European Union, (EU) was set up. Various forms of training bodies were created with the main goal of action on a local level. Universities opened a research department, the field of action of which is the area in which they actually work. The voluntary action by several partners led to a whole wealth of "pilot projects" being set up. They aim to identify a change in orientation for continuing vocational training as well as to involve those responsible in this dynamism. The Council, at the proposal of the Commission, decides on programmes and networks with a European dimension in order to support the exchange of experience and "good practice".

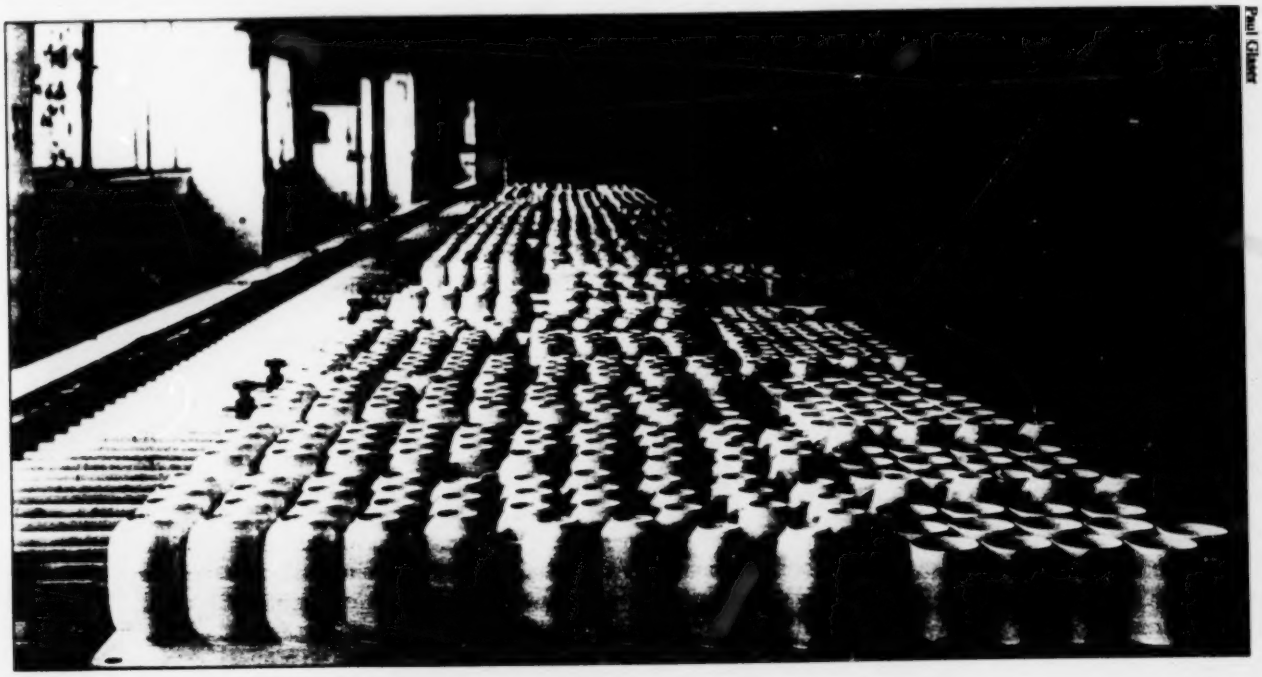
In various studies CEDEFOP identifies the role of vocational training as an essential component in the changes achieved. In 1980 it published a work entitled "Role of training in setting up new economic and social activities - France, Italy and the United Kingdom" (1), a study which set out to "explore new paths whereby continuing vocational training could offer concrete and convincing support in the creation of jobs and activities". The micro experiences identified focused on new roles, new approaches, for continuing vocational training and were seen as a subject for discussion by all those involved in economic and social development. It forced them to address the basic issue of what development was going to take place in future. In the situations analyzed, training succeeded in making the projects viable and reliable. In the author's opinion, this is because it had been flexible and programmable, it had been negotiated, the most important thing being its integrational and "tailor-made" character. Co-ordination, this was the buzz word! Was this already a transversal qualification, the kind of qualification so popular today: an energy catalyst, a "facilitator"? "A new occupation must emerge, a habit of dialogue, discussion, to be incorporated into all levels of

public administration" wrote Liliane Delwasse in Le Monde, 20.10.93. The goals of the projects can be grouped around the same headings as we have today: management training, training in the creation of small production units and local activities of a social and economic nature. At the present time this enormous potential of "jobs nearby" is recognized by everyone (cf. European Labour Week, Brussels, October 1993) but the mechanisms of financing which are still segmented impede its development.

Thus, local development emerged where new social links were set up: between inhabitants and public authorities, between social partners and public authorities, between public and private bodies, particularly those of a financial nature. The local level becomes identifiable, it is where, according to Wittgenstein, "something is taking place". In this context "of an event nature", training releases energy, transforms resources into know-how and skills and produces new ones. In order to assess the effects of vocational training and the knock-on effects, contagiousness and generalization, the classical cost-benefit analyses, identify some limits, the "goals/results" relation moving out of the linearity. As separate entities could only be compared if there were detailed and exact knowledge of the circumstances which led to their emergence. Hence, what are undertaken most frequently are descriptions which must identify the more or less good results for the use of a given operation in a given context. Wherever the associative fabric was more dense, where the ability of the local communities to organize themselves around a goal was confirmed, where the local authorities assumed responsibility for the survival of their territory, the schemes were more numerous and more integrated. They had a trail-blazing role. But the sense of urgency prevailed: good practice would be the practice which, in record time, made possible a record level of integration onto the labour market.

Vocational training, rhythm and conditions for development

As a back-up to Community bodies who were very concerned at the time with the rhythms and conditions of development in rural areas, CEDEFOP began, in 1983, analyzing the "vocational training needs of rural communities" (2). From this angle a comparison was made of national documents, CEPFAR reports (European Training and Promotion Centre for Framing and Rural Life) and the Commission. The author of this report could only conclude that there is recognized need for training everywhere to equip trainees with the following: an ability to judge and a sense of responsibility of the community. Added to this "the concept of vocational training needs is neither immediate nor tangible; it is up to the local communities themselves to identify them". Training in order to develop an area, this means coping with a large number of unknown factors. Assigning the analysis of the needs and the definition of action priorities to the people involved in the field seems to be quite normal. However, at this stage the approach is complicated because there are some technical obstacles and risks have to be taken: the risk of poorly pegging out the field of action, the risk of making mistakes by trying to anticipate. Does a short-term perspective (specific skills for firms in the local community, training paths for several of them, core skills for companies in different sectors of activity), offer more advantages? This would mean ignoring the unforeseeable affects linked to duration (cf. Gérard Calais) (3), the possibilities of drop-outs, changes in attitude, reflections of specific contexts which themselves are shaped by their own finalities. Development is undertaken by means of retouching what exists. However, it also calls for new creations, new facelifts. This could be, for example, the renewal of the industrial park. At this point it is essential to encourage entrepreneurial spirit, motivation, industrial know-how, attitudes. However, it is difficult to determine and



Paul Glaser

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prove the degree of acquisition. Managing training and local development means a policy involving continuity and a constant challenging of what exists. It cannot be left to elected representatives alone.

Furthermore, already at that time, it had been stressed that the distinction between initial and continuing training scarcely made sense in rural areas in which three elements: technical, economic and cultural - are viewed more and more as being a whole since, more than ever, workplace, lifestyle and social environment also constitute a whole. "And why not" the author concludes, reflecting the opinion of many people, "add political training as the fourth element" (2).

In very recent documents it is interesting to note opinions always heading in this direction. The reports, which have just been prepared by Gérald Bogard for the CDCC (Council for Cultural Cooperation) of the Council of Europe entitled "For active solid citizenship bound for solidarity" (4) and "For a socializing education of adults" (5).

In the special context of development in rural areas, CEDEFOP was brought to reflect on the professionalization of an emerging function, that of the "development agent". Thanks to the assistance of the European Social Fund training in this new profile of activity is emerging. This training has by no means lost its topicality. It is included along with 13 others in the list of occupations of the EUROQUALIFICATION working programme from a twofold angle: "facilitators of local development" and "restorer of old buildings".

For CEDEFOP the question was the kind of training desired for these "development agents". The results of a study on this subject were discussed in Seville in a working group at the forum "Regional development and vocational training" organized with the autonomous government of Andalusia in order to provide a forum for exchange for regional authorities who had attempted various forms of development and training. Following his analysis of the Spanish situation, the author of this study, today Deputy Director of CEDEFOP, talks of the "composite" occupational profile. G. Bogard, quoted above, today talks in terms of "poly- functionality". The goal is the same. The challenge is identical: to pursue an occupation which is located at the junction of complex systems. To be an analyst, guide, technician and banker. These two authors note for these occupations a strong desire for innovation and self-training, i.e. for the monitoring, evaluation and "capitalization" on experience, the essential fora and time for pooling of knowledge.

Principles and realities

The initiatives within the context of the link between "development and training" were, without doubt, laboratories in which training concepts and facilities have been transformed into what we today call the principles of responsibility, partnership and proximity. If the forms of education which were conceived and tested have, for overly long, been "peripheral" in respect of the systems in place without penetrating or transforming them to any major degree, their infrastructure, above all their financing and data collecting structures, were not. Even today when the principles mentioned above have theoretically been taken on board, the way institutions behave are still in disharmony with them.

Let us take the example of the collection of statistics on vocational training. In the study which has just begun (1993) for CEDEFOP on the methods of handling information in order to bring together the local labour markets and vocational training markets in the Netherlands, the author makes some surprising comments on the statistics available. For example, the number of students or pupils at the close of their education is not registered on a regional level. This information is purely national in character. The same applies to the size of the working population as this figure has been established on the basis of samples, it cannot be broken down by region. The information provided by the Chamber of Commerce on companies is, by contrast, regionally structured but so far it has not been used for forecasting purposes. Mobility studies on students or people at work present the same limits in respect of regional interpretation because they, too, have been undertaken on the basis of national samples. The dissemination of this information continues to be arbitrary: the general public is not familiar with it and there is not provision for its distribution to the main interested parties.

What is the situation with the funding mechanisms? In 1988 CEDEFOP in a study entitled "Communauté/Etat/Régions: fonctionnement interinstitutionnel" (6) examined the facilities for funding by the European Social Fund, of regional vocational training schemes. Although collected immediately prior to the reform of the Community structural funds (1989), it would seem that the comments and observations are still valid. First of all, the evidence that the regional authorities are not equal before financial and decision making powers. Moreover, the national architecture of these two powers is not symmetrical. In the Federal Republic of Germany, at the level of the district, the power is sure but it is the "Land" (the region in the French sense) which is the financial partner for Community funds.

The involvement of towns, regions and districts in the consultations prior to the reform of the funds, revealed the loss of efficiency due to this situation. What was called for was a "mode of operation more favourable to the districts, the lowest level of authority, and the only level capable of acting efficiently given their perfect knowledge of the local situation" (6). In France, although the 22 regions have had significant powers in respect of vocational training since 1982, they still only administered 7% of their training budget.

According to P. Graziani (Le Monde, 18.11.92.), "ten years of decentralization haven't changed the territorial architecture (22 regions, 100 *départements*, 37,000 districts). The polling system for regional elections prevented the emergence of a stable and coherent regional authority". The neighbouring countries, the author continues (Federal Republic of Germany, Belgium, Spain, Italy) have turned, by contrast, to the region as "the level for the encouragement and coordination of different infra-state levels". In the construction of a Europe of regions, the various Member States are not in the same strategic starting position. Here we should stress the creation envisaged in the Maastricht Treaty of a "committee of regions". It is hoped that it will make its voice heard in a decision-making process dominated by inter-governmental and supra-national

bodies and will turn regions into equal partners in the European Union. Is this "the new middle ages"? (7). "No", replies Jacques Delors (Le Monde, 8.11.93.), "it is simply that the traditional patterns are gradually being replaced by a world of networks, that a supple and complex system of limited powers is emerging, that the European Union is an unprecedented for the management of independencies, the drawing-up of new rules, the involvement of people in a project which for far too long was overly elitist".

From the local to the regional: the search for the right level of coordination

The initiatives to link development and training in a given microcosm, all too often the privilege of a few, of a sole person, of a "modernist commando" (to use the expression of D. Wolton in "The last Utopia - birth of a democratic Europe", 1993) (8) which had taken into its hands fate of the community? The strength of pioneers - a desire to move forward, innovation, self-responsibility - has it not concealed, in fact, a latent weakness, the inability to move towards other vital existing currents, stressing and thus exacerbating the fractures in the management of territorial space? This is a dynamic development which has been unleashed and is being maintained in a permanent climate of tension and compromise. The management of the "public space" requires an ability to regulate and deal with the tension between turning inwards and turning outwards. In some areas, this opening up was given as an essential condition for survival. Make no mistake, in reality we should not fall back only on the local level! Closed inwardly, local history becomes sterile. Broadening horizons or introspection, that is the crux of the matter. When local history falls back on itself, it ignores "other histories", it leads to contradiction.

But let us return to CEDEFOP whose work reflects one of the objectives of the Commission, the Council of Europe and OECD (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development): the setting up of an enormous and mutual process of apprenticeship in the exchange of ideas and experience. For its part, the Centre, between 1984 and 1986, enabled the regional officers in the sectors of employment and training in structurally weak regions to reflect on what they have achieved in their experiments, to "capitalize on their abilities" (Vocational Training Journal, No. 2/86). Following work on the local link between development and vocational training, the hypothesis was put forward that this was a more complex and more integrational power level, that links should be conceived, planned, evaluated, and that the region could be a good strategic level to move away from short-term policies to long-term policies, to pave the way for lasting socio-economic development, and to reorganize the complex interaction between all those involved on the supra- and infra-regional levels.

No region was able to pride itself on having set up a satisfactory coordination facility which would have ensured the full complementarity of the different means and resources but work has, indeed, begun to overcome this dissipation of energies. We refer the reader to the Bulletin mentioned above and to the important work by the Commission and international bodies quoted above. The challenge remains to elaborate and apply a functional concept of vocational training in the field. The process has begun. It has now become interesting to verify how the lever "vocational training" helped to shake-up the sluggish climate, conservative attitudes and institutional segmentation.

The value of exchange as a training method has been recognized from the very outset by CEDEFOP. In its statute the Centre constitutes a "platform for the exchange of ideas and experience" in order to carry forward vocational training. But organizing this exchange on a European regional level requires sufficient human and financial resources. Other priorities having appeared following the review of its tasks and missions, CEDEFOP, from 1986 onwards, did not repeat the experience of a third inter-regional forum. It is undoubtedly the case that numerous regions have continued with the dynamic process which had been triggered on their own initiative. Border regions have joined forces, going as far as developing common programmes for guidance and vocational training. Within a radius of 200 km around Brussels there are various examples of "sub-national groups" of this kind: EUREGIO (Belgium, Netherlands, Germany) in the east, the European Development Pole (Belgium, France, Luxembourg) in the south. To the west, it is only more recently that Belgium and France have got together to envisage a common future for border areas sharing the same industrial heritage.

Measuring the scale of this development

As we said above, development for an area is an event, a scenario developed together with the main actors. How do we measure this? This question was particularly relevant in the mid 1980s when Europe spread south (Spain, Greece, Portugal), when FEDER analyzed the results of ten years' efforts, when the European Social Fund had made available a considerable sum of ECUs to support the local dynamic processes of vocational training whereas more globally the Commission was examining the adequacy of its various financial instruments in its socio-economic policy.

There have, indeed, been efforts and methodological theories put forward to "evaluate vocational training in a territorial context". They range from journalistic-type reports covering the events as more or less successful experiments to targeted and sporadic analyses of cost benefit ratios. Entire shelves of libraries and documentation centres are filled with the results of these studies. Under the key words "regional - development - training - evaluation" the CEDEFOP database is able to supply an impressive number of document titles. And perhaps this is one of the criticisms heard most frequently: too many reports, not enough practical application. Certainly, the provider of European funds could not behave like a "super shareholder" seeking a return on his investment. It has supported each project along the lines of the goals for that project. It could not promote a "trans-contextual" evaluation unless, at the same time, it allowed an integration of the evaluation process of the local level. Squaring the circle? Readers interested in knowing more about the efforts of the Commission in this area can approach the "Evaluation Unit" of the European Social Fund.

at community level

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1. Bibliography

1. General information

COM (90) 609 final
The regions in 1990s
Fourth Periodic Report on the Social and Economic Situation and Development of the Regions of the Community
EC Commission
Luxembourg, 1991, 99 p. + 40 p. of statistical annexes
ISBN:92-77-68332-5
DA, DE, EN, ES, FR, GR, IT, NL, PT

This study describes and analyzes the socio-economic situation and development in regions in Member States of the European Community at the beginning of the 1990s. It places the emphasis on regional differences and employment/unemployment disparities and stresses the need for development and back-up measures to strengthen the regional structures. It also addresses the likely consequences of European integration for the regions. Very well documented drawing on statistics and studies, this study presents various tables and graphs as well as statistical data in the annex.

Les régions de l'espace communautaire
Charpentier J., Engel C.
Nancy, Presses Universitaires de Nancy, Collection "Cap Europe", 1992, 281 p.
FR
Presses Universitaires de Nancy
25, rue Baron Louis
P.O. Box 484
F-5400 Nancy

Austria, Switzerland, Germany are federal countries, Belgium, Italy and Spain regionalized countries and the Netherlands and France decentralized countries. The other members of the European Community are still considered as unitary countries. This great diversity lends itself to interregional comparisons based on statutes, competences and powers of the regions particularly in the field of external relations. We seem to be moving towards a politico-territorial construction of European Union in which the regional governments will have their role to play. The "Nation State" seems to be losing in importance. National reports examine the external powers of regions for each Member State. The book concludes with a study on the development of internal and external transborder cooperation in Europe and the role played by Community law. It also includes sophisticated demographic, economic and cultural comparisons as well as some examples, for instance interregional Saare-Lor-Lux cooperation (CEREQ summary).

European Development Agencies Directory
International Union of Local Authorities (IULA)
Brussels, 1991, 31 p.
EN, FR
GOM Vlaams-Brabant
Toekomstraat 36-38
B-1800 Vilvoorde

This directory presents the development agencies for each of the Member States of the European Community: data, date of foundation, contact persons, fields of activity etc.

2. Training and regional development

Evaluation as an approach towards the improvement of regional vocational training and labour market policy
Derenbach R.
European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (CEDEFOP)
Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the EC, 1992, 49 p.
ISBN: 92-826-5074-X (EN)
EN, DE

This report contains the results of a comparative analysis of a number of case studies commissioned by CEDEFOP to identify know-how in evaluation at local level. It tries to identify evaluation requirements in the programming and implementation of regional vocational training and labour market policy, including evaluation needs with respect to cooperation among participating agencies, programming, operating of programmes, promotion of training, etc.

La formation professionnelle. Etude réalisés sur demande de la Commission des Communautés Européennes DG V (Directorate-General for Employment, Social Affairs and Education)
Foesser C.
European Centre for Regional Development (CEDRE)
Strasbourg, CEDRE, 1991, 1 volume, 116 p. + 1 volume of annexes
FR
CEDRE
Immeuble Europe
20, Place des Halles
F-6700 Strasbourg

At the request of DG V of the Commission of the European Communities, the European Centre for Regional Development (CEDRE) has undertaken a study of the development of training in the following EC Member States: France, United Kingdom, Germany, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Greece by emphasizing the regional situa-

A recurring difficulty stems from the accepted idea in the traditional approach to evaluation, an idea according to which there are identifiable needs and their counterparts, the goals. This ignores the fact that in the field, the smallest operation, the most modest training facility for economic development is based on a shared decision, involving multiple funding which challenges everyone. Henceforth, we have to look for a systemic approach to negotiated evaluation within the framework of complex systems (9). By undertaking work with this initial hypothesis, CEDEFOP has perhaps helped to place the question of evaluation in a different light (the reader will be able to judge for himself by referring to the monographs and synthesis documents prepared between 1989 and 1992) (10). It has been brought into line with the research current which appeared towards the middle of the 1980s in the United States. According to D. Lipari (11) it intended to go even further in understanding the causes of the crisis in the "welfare state" and to suggest course corrections. In order to achieve this functional objective, the only justification for the evaluation, the field of study must be placed well upstream "of results" in order to take in the formulation and the implementation of policies taking in what the latter already include in terms of "semi-finished products" (De Leonardis, 1988) and a willingness to accept the unexpected, "the emerging situation". "The process of evaluation is part of the decision-making process, it retains the sense of decision, its only raison d'être" (9).

What to do in the field?

The observations of CEDEFOP (from 1988 to 1990 and from 1990 to 1992) have identified various forms of links between "goals - results" and identified interactive approaches affecting one or more systems. Interaction is even greater in the case of a well structured dialogue between the social partners, public authorities, funding bodies and trainers. In the case of self evaluations, in addition to the immediate questions linked to recruitment, we were able to glean more knowledge on the duration and quality of alliances, the motivation and kind of functioning of those concerned, the common reference values and the continuity of dialogue. Above all, we were able to understand the results of evaluation in respect of making training policies "more moderate".

In evaluation it is a matter of trying things out, of getting down to work. Triggering a process from some point in the "system" is beneficial and promising. The regions involved have made progress in establishing some interesting prerequisites:

- An increase in the volume, quality and diversity of communication in the regional area; gradually the true and common questions and replies can be formulated;
- The elaboration of pertinent information. The national statistics and data are supplemented by socio-economic maps; one function of a local orientation study is the regional institutional organization chart;
- The development and diversification of partnerships linked with a growth in the volume and nature of co-funding.

The region can re-establish its identity which has been slightly dented by economic failure and its partner, exodus . It can rehabilitate its industrial and architectural heritage, revive local tradition and knowledge, which when kept in the region could be useful in the setting up new or restructuring of existing businesses.

"Keeping these resources in the region" is an objective to be maintained even if the richness of a region can also be assessed on the strength of its ability to "train for exportation" (cf. G. Calais) (3). The areas in Europe where the exodus of skilled workers is still on a large scale are not necessarily those in which vocational training is unstructured (cf. M. Bannon) (12). If the hypothesis of geographic mobility has to be studied in greater detail, it is still, given the current state of infrastructure and attitudes, in the pipeline. According to information given to participants in a colloquium on the mobility of workers in Europe (Brussels, October 1993) it only affects some 300,000 people, 60% of whom wish to return to their home country! Finally, if the question of vocational training is a personal choice, this still continues in most cases to be very "restricted" in respect of local opportunities. Occupational mobility has to be organized for the "here and now".

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Formation et développement régional en Europe
Ministère de la ville et de l'aménagement du Territoire, Délégation à l'aménagement du Territoire et à l'action régionale (DATAR)
Paris, La Documentation française, 1991, 278 p.
ISBN: 2-11-002584-0
FR

This report takes up and examines in greater detail the subjects discussed at the international colloquium - Europe 1992: regions and training - held in Marseille on 7 and 8 December 1989. The following are presented for comparison between France and some other EC Member States: regional differences in training, the link between training and regional development and finally regional training policies.

Formation et compétivité des régions européennes. Un essai d'analyse sur quatre pays de la CEE
Bourdon J.
Dijon, Presses de l'Université de Bourgogne, IREDU Journal, No. 50, April 1991, 120 p.
FR
IREDU - University of Bourgogne, Mirande Faculty of Science
P.O. Box 138
F-21000 Dijon

This report studies mainly focuses on the current export situation within the framework of a regional economy and the link between human resources in an economic area and productivity increases. The author goes on to analyze, for France, the levels of export in relation to the variables of training for employment according to the sectors of activity and the training levels before addressing the development in the levels of export for each region in France, Spain, Federal Republic of Germany and Italy. The third chapter is dedicated to "the indicator of synthetic human capital" restricted to initial training for EC Member States. The author explains the calculation method and analyzes the results which reveal a high degree of heterogeneity in the length of schooling and the major impact of the metropolitan regions, impact validated subsequently with the help of statistical analyses (CEREQ summary).

Supply/demand interfaces in education and training in the regions of the European Community
Casey T.
Dublin, Technoskills Ltd, 1992, 46 p.
EN
Technoskills Ltd.
62, Kenilworth Square
IRL-Dublin 6

This synthesis report is based on twenty-six reports on skill shortages in various regions of the European Community. The report addresses the different levels and mechanisms through which skill needs of the individual company or group of companies are identified and articulated and then provided to the company.

3. Local employment initiatives

Building the future: Integrating the young unemployed through employment and training in urban renewal and renovation. Experiences and ideas in the European Community
European Commission - Directorate-General V for Employment, Social Affairs and Education
Brussels, 1990, 77 p.
EN, FR
200, rue de la Loi
B-1049 Brussels

This brochure presents the projects and methods which bring together training and work experience for young people with urban renewal and renovation in nine EC Member States: Belgium, Denmark, Federal Republic of Germany, Spain, France, Ireland, Luxembourg, Portugal and the United Kingdom.

New Partnerships for Employment Creation at Local Level.
This conference was held in Dublin on 21-22 March 1990 within the framework of the LEDA Programme (Local Employment Development Action Programme).
European Commission - LEDA Programme
Brussels, 1990, 40 p.
DE, FR, SP, IT
European Commision (DG V) - Local Employment Development Action Programme (LEDA)
Coordination: Gerda Loewen
200, rue de la Loi
B-1049 Brussels

This conference on the development of employment at local level discussed the idea of introducing partnerships at local level and between local communities in different member states, as a means of creating new employment possibilities. It looked at the logistics of organising such working partnerships and the development of local human resources potential to participate in such partnerships. It concludes by suggesting how the EC Commission can help develop such partnerships and local potential through its Structural Funds.

European Directory of local projects
Commission of the European Communities - European Community Action Programme on Long-Term Unemployment (ERGO)
Brussels, CEI Consultants Ltd., 1990, 155 p.
multi-lingual version: DA, DE, EN, ES, FR, GR, IT, NL, PT
CEI Consultants Ltd.
42 Frederick Street
UK-Edinburgh EH2 1EX

The European Directory is one of the ERGO programme's main tools for

information and exchange. It gives in a summarized form, using symbols, a description of over 1700 local projects helping the long-term unemployed. Its aim is to facilitate the creation of networks which will allow greater collaboration and the exchange of ideas which will help set up successful partnerships. The information contained in this directory is only part of the database of the programme.

Dispositifs d'insertion sociale, un atout pour le développement économique territorial. Une recherche prospective internationale CEE et USA
Cauquil G.
Insertion Sociale et Développement Territorial Intégré (CIRESE)
Paris, CIRESE, 1990 67 p.
FR
CIRESE
11, rue du Sentier
F-75002 Paris

This study aims to identify the integration projects oriented towards the economies in EC Member States other than France and in the United States in order to develop a comparative assessment tool and to provide French institutional heads and operators with a methodological framework of reference on the viability and the socio-economic efficacy of integration schemes. The methods, results and the analysis thereof are discussed and recommendations made. The annex contains 50 presentation sheets and an assessment of the integration schemes.

Partnerships: the key to job creation. Expériences from OECD countries
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Paris, OECD, serie: Local initiatives for job creation, 1993, 136 p.
ISBN: 92-64-14013-1
EN, FR

This volume presents case studies of ILEs in OECD countries which have developed in different circumstances: from sudden major plant closures which threaten to throw large numbers of people on the job market at the same time, to long-term and seemingly irreversible economic decline. These case studies describe examples of good practice as well as some of the pitfalls encountered. Despite the diversity of experiences, the common thread among them is the formation of effective partnerships between local, national, public and private actors.

Businesses and jobs in the rural world. Based on a conference held in Paris in January 1990 on enterprise and employment creation in rural areas
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Paris, OECD, serie: Local initiatives for job creation, 1992, 203 p.
ISBN: 92-64-13630-4
EN, FR

Creating new jobs and new businesses is a priority for rural areas because of the changes they are currently undergoing. This compendium of articles examines how local talents, materials and money can be used to create and maintain enterprises, employment and prosperity in the countryside of OECD countries. It then tries to sketch out practical details of what a rural development strategy involves. It emphasizes cultural and environmental factors and the importance of partnerships of the public and private sectors; suggests guidelines for action by practitioners and decision-makers at all levels of government and within the business community.

4. Structural policies

COM (93) 282 final
The future of Community Initiatives under the Structural Funds
Commission of the European Communities.
Luxembourg, 1993, 25 p. + annex
ISBN: 92-77-57005-9 (EN)
DA, DE, EN, ES, FR, GR, IT, NL, PT

This green paper from the Commission deals with the future of community initiatives carried out under the Structural Funds. After a brief review of how such measures came into being and how much money was allotted to them, their positive features are summarized and the priorities for future actions are listed. The Commission proposes five topics for future Community initiatives: crossborder, transnational and inter-regional cooperation and networks; rural development, assistance to outermost regions; employment and the development of human resources; mangement of industrial change.

Communication from the Commission
The Future of Community Initiatives under the Structural Funds
(COM(93) 282 final - C3-0299/93)
Rapporteur: Georgios Romeos
European Parliament, Documents
Luxembourg,
Office for Official Publications of the European Communities
1993, 27 p.
DOC FR/RR/236/236557.hd, A3-0279/93
DA, DE, EN, ES, FR, GR, IT, NL, PT

This report follows on from the Green Paper of the EC Commision and contains a draft resolution of the European Parliament on the future of Community initiatives within the framework of the structural funds, an explanation of the reasons and the opinions of different parliamentary committiees affected by this document.

Community Structural Funds
1994-99. Regulations and commentary
Commission of the European Communities.
Luxembourg, Office for Official Publications of the EC, 1993, 87 p.
ISBN: 92-826-6272-1
EN

The aim of this document is to give the users of the structural funds a clear understanding of the rules which have been developed and how they operate. The first section presents a summary comparison of the main amendments to the rules governing the structural funds with reference to the pertinent articles in the revised rules. The second section gives the six regulations governing the Structural Funds.

Territorial development and structural change. A new perspective on adjustment and structural change
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Developpement (OECD)
Paris, OECD, serie: Local initatives for job creation, 1993, 71 p.
ISBN: 92.64-14014-X
EN, FR

This report takes stock of the influence and relevance of local development efforts in the context of constant structural adjustment and high and lasting unemployment. It seeks to discuss the role and responsibilities of government in fostering development, and to establish some guidelines for action.

II. Employment: Community activities and international cooperation

1. Activities of the Directorate-General for Employment, Industrial Relations and Social Affairs - DG V

DG V has initiated a series of activities aiming to develop local employment and to create, among other things:

- the Local Initiative Programme for the Employment of Women (**ILE**) in order to give direct support to women setting up a business, cooperative or other job creation initiative;
- the **LEDA** Programme, action-research programme for the local development of employment, the aim being to evaluate the impact of the different steps tken on local, national and Community levels;
- the **ERGO** initiative aiming to combat long-term unemployment;
- the **SPEC** programme for support for job creation activities which supply economic and technical aid to activities to promote employment. This assistance involves diagnoses and forecasts of the repercussions of the completion of the Single European Market. This is linked to the process of economic and social integration in Europe;
- the **Study Visits Programme for Local Development Agents** (headed by the European Group for Local Employment Initiatives (EGLEI) offers training for agents by way of an exchange of and confrontation with practical ideas and the development of trans-national, "horizontal" cooperation;
- the regional trade union network in the case of the **TURN** initiatives to set up an independent network of employment initiatives on the level of the regional and local trade unions.

Furthermore, DG V has elaborated design and operational tools in order to ensure the success of the local management of job creation activities, the main ones being:

- a training programme in management (classes, conferences, case studies, audio-visual presentations etc...);
- a specialist bibliography (including expert reports) and guidelines for the benefit of local managerial staff;
- a manual on local development as a practical tool for those responsible for the management of local development programmes;
- methods and techniques for the evaluation of initiatives.

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Structural employment policy and labour market (DG V/B/1)
Head of Unit - A. Chapman
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2. Operational programmes of the Directorate-General for Regional Policies - DG XVI

Info Technique is a periodical of DG XVI (published irregularly) which covers operational programmes. A compendium of projects is edited annually in this series in EN and FR. A compendium of the projects for each of the Member States is scheduled for publication at the beginning of 1994. A list of DG XVI publications is obtainable upon request.

Contact: European Commission
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3. Programme of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

Twenty countries together with the European Commission are involved in the ILE programme (Local job creation initiatives) of the OECD. Set up in July 1982 by the OECD Council this programme aims to promote the exchange of experience and information, the pursuit of new approaches to job creation and the development of local economies.

Based on the different themes, the secretariat team - in close cooperation with the public authorities of the participants, the European Commission and the local authors - carries out research and engages in cooperation

leading to the organization of conferences, seminars, study trips and the preparation of numerous publications including the series Les Cahiers des ILE and Local Job Creation Initiatives (list available on request). An information letter Innovation and Employment is published jointly four times a year in EN, FR, IT by the OECD and the European Commission.

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Introductory note to national contributions

The following contributions concerning each Member State are based on contributions furnished by the members of CEDEFOP's documentary network.

Due to space considerations CEDEFOP has had to shorten them in a way which the authors might not necessarily have approved of. The full texts - many including bibliographical references with abstracts - are available from CEDEFOP. The structure of the table which has been completed for each country was proposed by CEDEFOP. Readers who wish to make comparisons between countries on the basis of the tables should do so with great care as they may not be comparing like with like. It should be noted that in the majority of cases the information relates to initial vocational training and not to continuing education and training. For more detailed information on the structures of the systems, readers are referred to the series of monographs on the vocational training system, now being published by CEDEFOP.

J.M. Adams

B

FOREM – L'Office communautaire et régional de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi

VDAB – Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding

CIDOC – Centre intercommunautaire de documentation pour la formation professionnelle

ICODOC – Intercommunautair documentatiecentrum voor beroepsopleiding

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The Belgian system of education and training and the territorial context

Introduction

Between 1980 to 1988 responsibility for education and vocational training was gradually devolved to the three respective Belgian communities, the Flemish, French and German-speaking communities.

a) Initial training:
Since 1988, despite the organizational modes specific to the three respective communities, it can be said that as far as initial training is concerned compulsory schooling (raised to 18 years of age in 1983) constitutes the general framework for secondary education for 12 to 18 year olds.

1) Full-time secondary education
Training oriented towards an occupation for young people up to the age of 18 is mainly provided within the secondary education system.

2) Alternance training systems
Young people fulfil the obligation for part-time schooling by undergoing an apprenticeship in an occupation in commerce, craft trades, services or small-scale industry. This apprenticeship, which concerns approximately 5% of young people, is organized by the training institutes for small businesses which come under the responsibility of the various communities.

b) Continuing training
In the case of training programmes, a distinction can be made between three main training providers:

1) Vocational training for people in employment and job seekers is the responsibility of vocational training and employment institutes, FOREM and VDAB, under the aegis of the communities and/or regions.

2) **The lifelong training institutes for small businesses** both for the French and Flemish communities are responsible for independent and craft occupations, access to which is regulated by law.

3) Finally, in Belgium, there are what are called **classes in social advancement.**

Initial vocational training: Belgium

Function	Level: National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	–	Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap - Departement Onderwijs - VDAB Ministère de l'éducation, de la recherche et de la formation Communauté française Verwaltung der Deutsch-sprachigen Gemeinschaft, Abteilung Unterricht (2) Ministère de l'Emploi et des Technologies de la Région wallonne	STC CSEF (5)
Planning of vocational training	–	VIOR CSEF DRB (3)	Schools on the secondary and higher secondary level
Defining vocational training programmes	–	Community Ministries of Education FOREM (4) VDAB (4) VIZO (6) IFFPCM (6)	Schools on the secondary and higher secondary level
Certification	–	Community Ministries of Education VIZO IFFPCM	Schools
Funding	Ministère national de l'Emploi et du Travail Nationaal Ministerie voor Twerkstelling en Arbeid (1)	Community Ministeries of Education People responsible for education and training	–
Information on training	Ministère national de l'Emploi et du Travail Nationaal Ministerie voor Twerkstelling en Arbeid (1)	Senior counsel for psycho-medical social guidance Hoge Raad voor Psycho-medisch-sociale Begeleiding	Schools PMS centres FOREM VDAB

References/important remarks

(1) Here it should be stipulated that funding and information only have to do with industrial apprenticeship and paid educational leave which are still the responsibility of this national ministry.

(2) In the new federal Belgium, the three Belgian communities are responsible for education and training whereas employment is a regional responsibility (Wallonian region, Flemish region and Brussels region).
Given the lack of symmetry between the communities as far as regional and community powers are concerned, there is a Wallonian Ministry for Employment and another for Training, in the Flemish community the regional and community merger means there is only one ministry with two departments.

(3) These three structures are responsible to the three relevant community ministries for education and training:
VIOR Vlaams Onderwijs Raad - Flemish Education Board
CSEF Conseil supérieur de l'éducation et de la formation - Higher council for education and training
DRB Deutschprachige Gemeinschaft Rat der Bildung - German-speaking community council for training

(4) VDAB Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling en Beroepsopleiding - Flemish employment and vocational training office
FOREM Office régional et communautaire de la formation professionnelle et de l'emploi - Regional and community office for vocational training and employment

(5) STC Subregionale twerkstellingscomités - Sub-regional committees on labour market issues
CSEF Comité subrégional de l'Emploi et de la Formation - Sub-regional committee for employment and training
The STCs and CSEFs act as observers on the labour market. The CSEFs also play this role in respect of training.

(6) VIZO Vlaams Instituut voor het Zelfstandig Ondememen - Flemish institute for the self-employed
IFFPCM Instituts francophones de Formation permanente des Classes moyennes - French speaking institutes for lifelong training for small businesses

Final remark: The local level is more extensive in Belgium and corresponds in fact to the 28 sub-regional divisions for employment and training.

This type of training is provided by the Flemish and French-speaking community ministries for education modelled on full-time education.

On the territorial level, Belgium is broken down into 28 sub-regional divisions for labour and/or training according to the respective communities: 16 for the Flemish community and 12 for the French community. They come under the responsibility of VDAB and FOREM and are backed by sub-regional committees for labour and training, responsible for promoting sub-regional labour and training policies together with those responsible for the socio-economic side and those responsible for education and vocational training who provide training on this level. In order to give a complete picture, mention should be made of the fact that the three Belgian communities (Flemish, French- and German speaking) have set up, by means of a decree in 1988 and 1989 within the same committees, standing committees for employment, training, education, which are described on the French side by the acronym CEFE.

On the Flemish side these are permanent working groups for education and the labour markets ("permanente werkgroepen onderwijsarbeidsmarkt"). For the German-speaking community, an identical body is responsible for the sub-regional division of the region of Saint-Vith and Eupen in close symbiosis with the Wallonian region.

DK

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The organisation of the Danish initial vocational training system

1. Vocational education and training in Denmark.

The social partners participate extensively in the policy making and management of the system at central as well as local level, and the system has been designed to ensure that the labour force has the skills and qualifications demanded in the labour market.

2. The vocational education and training reform of 1989.

Since 1. January 1991 the vocational education and training system in Denmark has changed dramatically. The statutory basis for the reorganisation of vocational education primarily consists of the Law concerning vocational schools (Law 210, 1989) and the Law concerning vocational education and training (Law 211, 1989).

The Law concerning vocational schools forms the overall framework for management, finance and other activities of the vocational schools. The position of the schools as an institution has been redefined and far-reaching decentralisation of powers has taken place to the vocational schools. In Denmark there are about 115 vocational schools spread all over the country - 57 technical schools and 58 commercial schools. 30 agricultural schools which had been subject to a separate law are now also subject to this law.

The Law concerning vocational education and training replaces the Law concerning apprentices (of 1956) and the EFG-law (of 1977) and provides an overall framework for the vocational education and training sector.

The system has three characteristics which have been reenforced by the 1989 reform:

- it is based on the principle of alternance between school and practical work experience in enterprises
- it provides not only vocational trade skills, bul also transversal and general skills
- the social partners influence the system comprehensively, being involved at national and local level.

3. The influence of the social partners.

The reform has also changed the way in which initial vocational education and training is organised and the power structure between the state, the social partners and the schools.

At national level a new Vocational Education and Training Council has been established with the task of considering general issues relevant to all types of vocational education and training. The Council is an advisory board and makes recommendations to the Minister of Education. There are 20 voting members, and the Employer's Confederation (DA) and the Confederation of Trade Unions (LO) each appoint 8 members.

The Trade Committees - also with parity of membership - perform the central role in relation to curricula **at national level**. They are now responsible for modernising the training part of the courses, for setting the standards of apprentices' final examinations and for conducting assessments. They have acquired a great deal of influence over the school parts of vocational education and training.

Initial vocational training: Dinamarca

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	National Education and Training Council Ministry of Education	–	School Governing Boards Local Education and Training Committees
Planning of vocational training	Ministry of Education Vocational Education and Training Council Trade Committees	–	School Governing Boards Local Education and Training Committees
Defining vocational training programmes	Trade Committees Ministry of Education	–	Local Education and Training Committees Schools
Certification	Trade Committees Ministry of Education	–	Trade Committees Schools
Funding	Ministry of Education (In-school part) Employers Reimbursement for Trainees' Wages (AER) (subsidizing trainees' wages during school periods)	–	Ministry of Education Employers Reimbursement for Trainees' Wages Companies (Practical Work Part)
Information on training	Ministry of Education National Council for Educational and Vocational Guidance (RUE)	–	Municipal School Youth and Counselling Scheme Public Employment Service Schools

At **school** level **Local Education and Training Committees** have been set up. Committee members are proposed by the local branches of employer and worker organisations, and appointed by the trade committee. The representatives of the social partners (parity applies) must make up a majority in the committee. They are required to act in an advisory capacity to the school, and promote cooperation between the school and the local labour market.

The system of management of the local schools has changed. The role of the Ministry of Education is reduced to setting overall objectives and rules for the content and financing of courses, and all detailed planning and execution has been assigned to the schools. The schools have acquired great freedom of action with regard to planning, as well as financial management. The school governing boards have gained increased importance and have now full management responsibility for the school. A school governing board has 6-12 members with equal representation of the social partners with one person representing the county council and another the municipal council. The board has the final managerial responsibility for the school, and for the annual programme of activities. It approves the school budget, and the board employs the school director.

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- Law No. 211, 1989, concerning vocational education and training.

D BIBB
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The Dual System of Vocational Training

Vocational training in the Federal Republic of Germany revolves around the dual system of vocational training. Approximately two-thirds of the young people born in any one year will embark upon vocational training organized in this way. A typical feature of the dual system is the combination of - mainly practical - training in an enterprise or an extra-plant training centre coupled with eight to twelve lessons per week dealing principally with the theoretical aspects of the occupation. For the latter, trainees generally attend a (part-time) vocational school one or two days a week.

In the dual system, on-the-job training and vocational schooling come under the legislative jurisdiction of different authorities: The Federal Government and the Bundestag are responsible for regulating on-the-job vocational training while the Laender governments (Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs and the Senators for Schooling in the Laender) are responsible for vocational schooling. On-the-job vocational training in the dual system is governed by training regulations which have applicability throughout the country; vocational schooling on the other hand is governed by the Laender skeleton curricula which are issued by the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs or the Senators for Schooling of the Laender after they have been coordinated with the training regulations. Trainers are responsible for the on-the-job training in enterprises; vocational school teachers take the responsibility in vocational schools.

On-the-job Vocational Training in accordance with the Vocational Training Act

The most important principles of the dual system can be taken from the Vocational Training Act:

- the State regulates the contents of on-the-job vocational training (conducted in enterprises);
- the "training relationship" between the training enterprise and the young man or woman is regulated in a civil law training contract. The enterprise which will conduct the training concludes a training contract with the trainee to establish a training relationship;
- autonomous institutions of the economy - the chambers - supervise on-the-job vocational training and are responsible for conducting the examinations for vocational training under the dual system. In transferring this sovereign authority, the State demands that the chambers set up vocational training committees comprising an equal number of representatives of the employers and the trade unions, and vocational school teachers who have an advisory vote.

The Vocational School in the Dual System

According to the Basic Law of the Federal Republic of Germany, responsibility for schooling and thus for vocational schools comes under the jurisdiction of the Federal Laender. Consequently, regulations about mandatory schooling and training at vocational schools are in keeping with the school laws in the various Laender. The joint decisions and skeleton agreements made by the Standing Conference of Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Laender ensure that schooling throughout the Federal Republic retains the standardization it needs.

The "Social Partner Model"

In no other area of vocational training is the need for those responsible to cooperate and work together quite so apparent as in decisions on recognizing training occupations and drawing up training regulations.

Although the Federal Government sets the legal framework for vocational training and in this way ensures uniform standards, it does not normally carry out this training itself. Vocational training is generally conducted by private enterprises and administrative organizations. The Federal Government honours the fact that training regulations have to be accepted and implemented in the training practice of enterprises by involving the social partners (the trade associations and organizations of the employers and the trade unions) in the process of developing training regulations. The social partners are involved from the outset and the Government does not usually decree any law on such matters before the respective social partners have expressed their agreement.

This "principle of consensus" is one of the essential foundations underlying the dual system.

Initial vocational training: Federal Republic of Germany

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	Federal Labour Office, Nuremberg Institute for Employment Research (IAB Nuremberg) Federal Institute for Vocational Training, Berlin/Bonn Federal Ministry of Education and Science, Bonn Specialized ministries	Labour offices in the Federal Laender Laender ministries	Local labour offices
Planning of vocational training	–	Chambers of Industry and Commerce Chambers of Handicrafts Chambers of Agriculture Lawyers' Chambers General Medical Council School supervisory boards for vocational schools Laender committees for vocational training	Enterprises Vocational schools
Defining vocational training programmes	–	Chambers of Industry and Commerce Chambers of Handicrafts Chambers of Agriculture Lawyers' Chambers General Medical Council School supervisory boards for vocational schools Laender committees for vocational training	Enterprises
Certification	–	Chambers of Industry and Commerce Chambers of Handicrafts Chambers of Agriculture Lawyers' Chambers General Medical Council School supervisory boards for vocational schools Laender committees for vocational training	Vocational schools
Funding	–	Enterprises for the on-the-job part of vocational training Educational authorities for the theoretical part of vocational training	Enterprises Public authorities
Information on training	Federal Labour Office	Careers Information Centres attached to the labour offices Chambers of Industry and Commerce Chambers of Handicrafts	Careers Information Centres attached to the labour offices

The experts of the employers' associations and the trade unions are thus involved in the decision-making processes of the Federal Government and in drawing up the training regulations for which the Federal Institute for Vocational Training is responsible.

Financing Vocational Training

Vocational training in the dual system is financed through two main sources:

- Providers of on-the-job training (i.e. the enterprises themselves) finance their part and
- Public spending finances the (vocational) school part of the training.

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The Organization of Vocational Training - a summary

Formal vocational education and training is fully centralized, but in many cases the specializations established in different areas are based on local or territorial needs.

This summary is structured as follows.

A. Formal initial training in technical and vocational education within the education system provided mainly by the Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs (YPEPTH), as well as the Manpower Employment Organization (OAED), supervised by the Ministry of Labour, and different Ministries/National Organizations, providing initial training in particular areas.

B. Formal initial training outside the education system provided by the Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK), supervised by YPEPTH.

Initial Training

A. Within the Education System

In each prefecture there is an administrative body, the Directorate for Secondary Education, which is responsible for all the schools established in its region. In prefectures where many schools are operating, besides the Directorate, there are Secondary Education Offices (supervised by the local Directorate), which are responsible for certain groups of schools. Instructions, information, questions etc, coming from the Ministry and addressed to one or more schools, are forwarded through the following channel: Ministry to Directorate to Office to School(s). The some path is followed backwards when a school needs to communicate with the Ministry.

Nevertheless, there are cases when the Ministry communicates directly with a school and vice versa, e.g. when schools apply for the establishment of a new specialization to the respective Office. The applications are forwarded to the Directorate and are examined by the local Council for Education. Those approved by the council are forwarded to the Ministry. Each year, the Directorate for Secondary Education Management (in the Ministry) which is responsible for the final approval or disapproval of applications, publishes a catalogue with the approved specializations and the respective schools. The catalogue is published in the Official Journal of the Government and the new specializations start operating.

The above procedures are based on local (prefecture) or regional (group of neighboring prefectures) needs and concern the establishment of specializations which are already operating in other schools. The establishment of specializations, which have never operated before, is the exclusive responsibility of the Ministry, and its Pedagogical Institute which plans the establishment of new specializations and is also responsible for the compilation of the respective curricula. OAED supervises the apprenticeship schools operationg under the Law 1346/83 and their trainee placement programmes.

The central body responsible for setting up the guide-lines of vocational training and employment is the National Council for Vocational Training and Employment (ESEKA). It has been established in the Ministry of Labour. Accordingly, in each region, Regional Committees for Vocational Training and Employment (PEEKA) have been appointed. PEEKAs submit their reports and proposals to ESEKA. Finally, in each prefecture, Local Committees for Vocational Training and Employment (NEEKA) have been appointed. NEEKAs examine the local needs for vocational training and employment and submit their reports and proposals to the PEEKA which is operating in the region to which the prefecture of the respective NEEKA belongs. The final decisions, concerning the establishment of apprenticeship schools or

vocational specializations in those schools, are taken centrally. Any decision must be approved by the Ministry of Education before it is applied.

B.Formal initial training outside the education system

The Organization for Vocational Education and Training (OEEK) was established in 1992. Representatives of the social partners participate in its management board. OEEK supervises the Institutes for Vocational Training (IEK).

There are no regional Directorates or Offices established and IEKs directly communicate with OEEK and vice-versa. All decisions are taken centrally in OEEK. Advisory Committees (TSE) have been appointed in each IEK, which propose the establishment of specializations (new or existing in other IEKs) in the schools of their responsiblility. TSEs are composed of 3 representatives of OEEK, 3 representatives of the employers and 3 representatives of the employees. Their proposals are examined and approved or rejected by OEEK.

Initial vocational training: Greece

Function	Level National
Employment and training observatories	OAED is only responsible body for employment.
Planning of vocational training	1. Ministry of National Education and Religous Affairs 2. OAED 3. OEEK 4. Ministries/Organizations Each organisation plans the training in the schools of its responsibility aided by regional or local bodies.
Defining vocational training programmes	Each one of the organisation mentioned in column "Planning of vocational training" is responsible for defining the programmes of the schools of its responsibility. The programmes must be approved by YPEPTH before they are applied.
Certification	Each of the organisations mentioned in column "Planning of vocational training" is responsible for awarding the certification diplomas to the students or trainees in the schools of its responsibility.
Funding	Each of the bodies mentioned in column "Planning vocational training" is responsible for funding schooling or training in the schools of its responsibility. In some cases, they are subsidized by ESF.
Information on training	Each of the bodies mentioned in column "Planning of vocational training" is responsible for providing information on training courses operating in the schools of its responsibility.

Abbreviations - Terms
OAED: Manpower Employment Organization
OEEK: Organization for Vocational Education and Training
YPEPTH: Ministry of National Education and Religious Affairs

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The organisation of initial vocational training at regional and local level:

Responsibility for setting standards and regulating basic vocational training, as also competence in other educational matters lies with

A) The **Ministry of Education and Science** through the Office of the Secretary of State for Education, which is responsible inter alia for orderly planning and innovation in educational courses below university level, directs the inspectorate, as also the Subsecretariat for Education and Science which draws up and coordinates the Ministry's budget policy and is responsible for relations with other ministries, the autonomous communities, local businesses and government bodies. The Subsecretariat is a member of the Conference of Education Councils of the autonomous communities.

B) Those **autonomous communities** who under their constitutive laws have assumed responsibility in educational matters not only for management but also for regulating, setting standards, and implementing policies, namely Andalusia, Catalonia, The Basque Country, Valencia, Navarra, Canary Islands, and Galicia.

The Council of State responsible for schools, on which all the sectors involved are represented, participates in and advises on the general planning of education. It has school councils at provincial, district and local level.

Territorial organisation

Due to the decentralisation of responsibility currently under way in the educational field, a distinction must be made between

I. Autonomous communities for which the Ministry of Education and Science still has competence in educational matters.
II. Autonomous communities with full competence in educational matters.

I. The first group of autonomous communities have an administrative department which manages all matters connected with education. In each province there is a provincial directorate of the Ministry of Education and Science which serves as an executive arm for government policy and its action programme.

Alongside these are the provincial vocational training commissions who analyse overall vocational training needs in the provinces and submit for decision at provincial level the guidelines issued by the General Council for Vocational Training, while periodically informing the General Council of the proposals and reports they have adopted.

Management at local level is the responsibility of the local education councils and the municipal authorities.

II. The second group of autonomous communities have their own organisational structure with departments of education.

In order to guarantee observance of the law and an improving quality of the educational system, the educational authority is also entrusted with the function of an inspectorate. This function is performed by the High Inspectorate put under goverment control by Article 61 of the 1990 Law on the Reform of the Educational System. In the case of the Technical Inspectorate these functions are carried out by central and decentralised bodies. Autonomous communities with full competence in educational matters set up regional departments of both the High Inspectorate and the Technical Inspectorate.

One of the purposes of occupational training is to ensure that the unemployed who wish to enter or re-enter the labour market are able to acquire sufficient vocational qualifications through training activities organised under the FIP employment training and integration plan under the aegis of the National Institute of Employment (the executive arm of the Ministry of Labour and Social Security) or the autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for management of vocational training - Andalusia, Galicia, Catalonia and Valencia.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Security is responsible for the triennal planning of activities having regard to the proposals made by the autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for management of the FIP employment training and integration plan, and allocates functions at central government and autonomous community level. Before the plan is approved it is submitted to the Standing Committee of the General Council for Vocational Training for comments.

Each year the National Institute of Employment, or the autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for managing the FIP employment training and integration plan, draw up a programme of courses for their area having regard to the objectives laid down in the triennial plan.

Initial vocational training: Spain

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	The Employment Monitoring Service of the National Institute of Employment is supplied with information on those seeking jobs and training on the local and sectoral labour markets. It collates the data resulting from the analysis of regional markets in all the provinces.	The provincial offices of the National Institute of Employment define the regional labour markets, coordinate the analysis of the regional labour market and collate provincial data. The provincial vocational training committees conduct a global analysis of training needed in terms both of quality and quantity.	The network of employment centres run by the National Institute of Employment analyse the regional labour markets. The regional school councils are consulted in matters connected with the planning of teaching posts.
Planning of vocational training	The Ministry of Labour and Social Security draws up a three-year plan for training in special subjects and for priority groupings. The Standing Committee of the General Council for Vocational Training provides information for planning purposes. The Ministry of Education and Science is responsible for the general planning of the educational system (regulating levels, degrees, specialist courses and teaching methods). The Council of State for Schools is involved in general planning.	Autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for occupational training draw up planning proposals. Autonomous communities with full responsibility in educational matters implement government plans.	–
Defining vocational training programmes	National Institute of Employment The Ministry of Education and Science lays down minimum education levels.	Provincial and Insular Executive Committees of the National Institute of Employment Official bodies of the autonomous communities	–
Certification	The National Institute of Employment is responsible for issuing certificates of competence. The Ministry of Education and Science lays down the conditions for obtaining such certificates and their issue and for the recognition of academic and professional qualifications.	Autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for management of the FIP employment training and integration plan are responsible for issuing certificates of competence. Autonomous communities with full responsibility in educational matters are authorised to issue certificates of academic qualification.	–
Funding	Ministry of Labour and Social Security Ministry of Education and Science.	Autonomous communities who are responsible therefor under their constitutive legislation.	Municipal authorities.
Information on training	Vocational training statistics of the National Institute of Employment. Educational statistics of the Ministry of Education and Science.	Statistics of the autonomous communities who have assumed responsibility for management of occupational training. The provincial offices of the National Institute of Employment. The educational statistics of the autonomous communities.	–

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Territorial organization of vocational training

In France, for ten years now, some state powers in the field of education, vocational training and apprenticeship have been passed on to the regions: this is what we call decentralization.

Breakdown of competences in the field of education

The laws of 22 July 1983 and of 25 January 1985 have given the regions powers in the field of the equipment for and operation of public education institutions. The *départements* are responsible for colleges and the regional councils are responsible for grammar schools.

The state has retained responsibility for the contents of education, supervision, recognition, recruitment and staff statutes.

Breakdown of competences in the field of vocational training and apprenticeship.

The law of 7 January 1983 has given the regions powers under common law in the field of vocational training and apprenticeship.

The state defines the legislative and regulatory framework and retains responsibility for funding:

- training included in the budget of the various ministries and those of bodies such as the Association nationale pour la formation professionnelle des adultes - AFPA (the national association for adult vocational training);
- training for the young, the handicapped, refugees, offenders, young people in institutionalized education;
- activities which are part of priority measures drawn up every year.

The regions have more or less full responsibility for apprenticeship.

A **committee for the coordination of regional apprenticeship programmes and vocational training programmes** has been set up on a national level to facilitate the coherence and harmonization of programmes of the state and the regions.

Decisionmaking bodies

Within the framework of decentralization, the **regional council** is the executive body. It prepares a **regional programme for apprenticeship and vocational training**; this involves general orientations which are then translated into training activities financed by the region. In order to finance these activities, the regions draw on funds made available by the state and their own tax revenue.

The vocational training services of the regional councils are lean structures but they do have external state services (regional offices of the ministries) in order to deal with the demands for funding from the training bodies.

Deconcentration is the general rule for the breakdown of powers and resources between the different levels of **state** civil administration: national level, districts, *départements*.

On the national level the inter-ministerial committee, the ministry responsible for vocational training, the steering group of senior civil servants and the council for the management of the vocational training and social advancement fund (FPPS) are involved in the design, facilitation, orientation, evaluation and control.

On a regional level the **regional préfet** stipulates the regional orientations necessary for the implementation of national and Community policies for economic and social development. He administers an annual budget of operating and equipment funds for priority activities.

He chairs the **standing regional group for vocational training and social advancement (FPPS)** which comprises representatives of the Ministry of Education (technical education and continuing training) and other ministries (labour, agriculture, industry, commerce and craft occupations). This group examines vocational training and social advancement needs in the region in line with economic demands and labour prospects, measures to promote the development of coordinated activities of vocational training within the region, and proposals for public equipment programmes.

On the *département* level, the **département prefect** takes decisions concerning the national employment agreements (Fonds national de l'emploi - FNE, national employment fund). As of this year it is the département director of labour, employment and vocational training (DDTEFP) which deals with the agreements reached in respect of the fund for vocational training and social advancement (FFPPS).

There are consultative and administrative bodies both for the state and the regions on all levels.

One example is the **FPPS regional committee (COREF)** on which the social partners are represented. It is consulted by the state and the regions

on the training programmes which they are setting up. On the *département* level, a similar role is played by the FPPS *département* committee.

The law of 16 July 1971 created an **administrative authority** for vocational training. This is currently attached to the Ministry of Labour.

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Initial vocational training: France

Function	Level		
	National	**Regional**	**Local**
Employment and training observatories	CEREQ DEP	Centres linked to CEREQ OREF	–
Planning of vocational training	Ministry of Education: creation of jobs, openings, closure of classes	Regional council: forward training plan	–
Defining vocational training programmes	Ministry of Education	–	–
Certification	Ministry of Education	Academies	–
Funding	Ministry of Education: training, management and remuneration of staff	Equipment and operation of grammar schools: regions	Equipment and operation of **colleges**: *département* of **schools**: communes
Information on training	CIDJ ONISEP	CRIJ DRONISEP	CIJ C.I.O.

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professionnelle, 127 rue de Grenelle, F-75700 Paris

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Paris: l'auteur, 1993, pp. 495-524
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The Role of National, Regional and Local Organisations in Training in Ireland

Because of the small size of Ireland (population 3.5 million), all publicly-funded training provision is within the overall authority of national government departments (ministries). These, in turn, operate largely through national agencies and organisations. The exceptions are the Vocational Education Committees (VECs) which have statutory responsibility at local level. However, all the organisations operate local networks for delivery.

Education Structures

The Department of Education is the body responsible for the education and training of young people within the education system. No comprehensive statutory framework exists in respect of the Department's functions although this will be remedied when the government brings forward its Education Bill in 1994.

At second level, the majority of schools receive funding directly from the Department of Education (i.e. central government). However, the vocational school sector (approx. 25 % of second-level pupils), falls under local Vocational Educational Committees (VECs). There are 38 such committees; one for each county, and for 12 of the larger cities or towns. These committees are established under the Vocational Education Act of 1930 and represents a cross-section of educational, cultural, industrial and commercial interests.

Technical courses at third level are offered in six Dublin Institute of Technology Colleges and ten Regional Technical Colleges. These colleges since 1992 are autonomous bodies under the national control of the Department of Education.

Vocational education and training courses, at both second and third-level, are assessed and certified by national agencies under the Department of Education.

Training organizations

Outside the education system there are four major public training organisations. FAS - the Training and Employment Authority - established under the Labour Services Act 1987, provides training, employment and guidance services for the unemployed, apprentices and employees.

- Cert - the State Tourism Training Agency incorporated under the Companies Acts in 1963, is under the authority of the Department of Tourism and Trade.

- Teagasc - the Agriculture and Food Development Authority established by the Agricultural (Research, Training and Advice) Act in 1988, comes under the authority of the Department of Agriculture and Food

- the National Rehabilitation Board (NRB), instituted by the Department of Health in 1967 under the National Rehabilitation Board (Establishment) Order 1967 has overall responsibility for the training of disabled people, though not primarily a training body itself.

Local developments

Recognising the value of local involvement in human resource development, the government over the last few years has established certain local representative structures. Under the Programme for Economic and Social Progress (PESP) in 1991, the government established Area Partnership Companies in twelve severely disadvantaged local areas. These companies contain representatives of the social partners, community bodies and statutory agencies. Their role is to coordinate activities directed at combatting long-term unemployment in their areas including training programmes.

Initial vocational training: Ireland

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	Department of Education FAS CERT TEAGASC NRB	–	–
Planning of vocational training	Department of Education Department of Enterprise and Employment FAS CERT TEAGASC NRB	FAS Regional Offices VECs TEAGASC CERT	FAS Training Centres Local VEC Colleges Local CERT Colleges TEAGASC
Defining vocational training programmes	Department of Education Department of Enterprise and Employment FAS CERT TEAGASC NRB	VECs TEAGASC CERT	–
Certification	NCVA (1) NCEA (2) Department of Education FAS City & Guilds TEAGASC NTCB (3)	–	–
Funding	Exchequer European Social Fund	VECs	VECs
Information on training	FAS CERT TEAGASC NRB	VECs FAS CERT Regional Offices TEAGASC Training Centres REHAB Regional Offices	FAS VECs Local CERT Colleges TEAGASC REHAB Training Centres

References:
(1) National Council for Vocational Awards (2) National Council for Educational Awards (3) National Tourism Certification Board

More recently the Government has decided to establish 36 County Enterprise Boards to help develop small businesses. These bodies will, inter alia, work with those vocational education and training agencies providing enterprise training courses and supports.

Much of publicly-funded initial training in Ireland is supported by EC Structural Funds. Although Ireland is treated as a single region for Structural Fund purposes, the government established Sub-regional Review Committtees to review and monitor activities under the 1989-93 programme. The Local Government Act, 1991, established new Regional Authorities comprising elected representatives of the local authorities in each region. Under the new Structural Fund framework, 1994-99, these 8 Regional Authorities will review and monitor the implementation of measures (including training).

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The programme is an agreement reached between the government and

the social partners to accelerate economic and social progress in the nineties. The combatting of long-term unemployment is an important aspect of this agreement. This is dealt with by the proposed establishment of 12 area-based partnerships in deprived areas. These partnerships comprise representatives of the social partners, community and statutory agencies including FAS - the Training and Employment Authority, working together on activities aimed at alleviating long-term unemployment.

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Initial vocational training

Initial training in Italy is aimed at young people who have attended compulsory education and wish to acquire a specific vocational qualification.

Regions plan this type of training though multi-annual and annual plans. The multi-annual plans, of a strategic type, are closely linked to regional political and economic objectives and the annual plans, of an enacting type, relate to the allocation of the resources needed to implement specific training projects.

In Italy, training activities are implemented by some 1600 vocational training centres run both by regions and by agencies under conventions with these regions. In Italy, the most representative vocational training agencies, by number of establishments, courses and types of activity, are as follows: ENAIP (Ente Nazionale ACLI Istruzione Professionale), CNOS (Centro Nazionale Opere Salesiane), IAL-CISL (Istituto Addestramento Lavoratori - Confederazione Italiana Sindacati Lavoratori), ENFAP-UIL (Ente Nazionale Formazione Addestramento Professionale dell'Unione Italiana Lavoratori).

National policies to support vocational training and the employment of young people place great emphasis on apprenticeship and the work-training contracts set up by Law 863 of 1984 and subsequent amendments.

The institution of apprenticeship, available to people aged over 15, may vary in length from three to five years. It is regulated by Law 443 of 1985 which provides the regions with guidelines intended to support the craft sector and vocational training in this field. Almost all the regions have also issued specific regulations on apprenticeship which include the grant of incentives to employers for both the recruitment and training of apprentices.

From the point of view of distribution in Italy, vocational training centres were located largely in the Northern regions in 1993, while few such institutions were to be found in the Central and Southern regions.

Regional training powers at regional and local levels. The Italian debate

Following the regionalization of vocational training in the 1970s and the long period of consolidation, followed by the approval of Law 845/1978 (the outline law setting out fundamental principles on which regions should in turn base their own legislation), discussion of the new shape and new roles of vocational training took off again in the second half of the 1980s.

Quantitative data relating to the vocational training system, paving the way for the current discussions of reform, show that:

- The partners involved in promoting and governing the vocational training system are the State (1/3, almost exclusively basic education), the regions (1/5) and enterprises (through apprenticeship and work-training contracts);
- almost 600 000 people are involved in State vocational training (State vocational schools), some 400 000 in regional vocational training and over 1 000 000 in apprenticeship and work-training contracts;
- the vocational training provided by the regions included, at the beginning of the 1990s, some 20 000 courses (mostly initial, level 1 and level 2 training) for over 390 000 trainees (over 50% at levels 1 and 2); 36% of courses were aimed at adults (retraining, refresher training, specialist and advanced training).

The publication of the "Carta delle priorità per la qualità e l'integrazione della formazione professionale" (ISFOL 1991), the organization of the national conference on vocational training promoted by the Ministry of Labour (1992) and the national seminar at Ferrara on vocational training policies (1993) provide useful information on the main aspects of current discussions of the reform of the vocational training system.

Initial vocational training: Italy

Function	Level: National	Level: Regional	Level: Local
Employment and training observatories	Ministry of Labour and Social Security - focuses on employment problems at national level Central Employment Committee ISFOL Employers-Unions	Regions - Commissioner for training - focuses on regional employment problems	Provinces Chambers of Commerce Research agencies (local and independent) - focuses on local employment problems
Planning of vocational training	Ministry of Labour and Social Security - establishment and financing of schemes aimed at workers abroad - preparation and financing of training ventures under cooperation programmes with foreign countries Regions - multi-annual plans	Regions - Commissioner for training - through multi-annual and annual plans	Provinces Districts Mountain communities Communes
Defining vocational training programmes	Ministry of Labour and Social Security, in some cases Ministry of Education - for trainers in the regional system - for regions where there is a substantial imbalance between labour supply and labour demand	Regions - Commissioner for training - by conventions with private agencies satisfying the statutory requirements	In some cases, certain research agencies may provide help in formulating curricula: Universities Public and private scientific institutions Training agencies
Certification	Ministry of Labour and Social Security Placement offices - Award of qualifications	Regions - Commissioner for training - certificates of aptitude in the qualification	Provinces - attendance certificates
Funding	Ministry of Labour and Social Security - special projects - rotation fund for European Social Fund projects	Regions - Commissioner for training	Provinces Chambers of Commerce Union confederations Enterprises Other public and private agencies
Information on training	Ministry of Labour and Social Security National Labour Market Monitoring Unit ISFOL	Regions - Commissioner for training Regional Labour Market Monitoring Unit Employment agencies	Research agencies: CNR CRAI

Sources:
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The regionalization of vocational training in the Netherlands

The Dutch education system has traditionally combined centrally directed educational policy with decentralized administration and school and college management. Central government ensures that there are sufficient educational institutions and an acceptable geographical spread, lays down the minimum number of pupils or students per institution, determines what subjects are taught and specifies the qualifications that teachers must possess. The duties of the provincial authorities include ensuring that there are sufficient state schools and colleges in their area (in addition to denominational and other institutions which are state-funded but not state-run), while the municipalities are the "proper authorities" for the state schools and colleges. The municipalities also enforce the Compulsory Education Act in relation to both state and non-state schools and provide both sectors with additional resources on an equal basis. Legislation now in preparation will give schools and colleges greater and greater autonomy.

Initial vocational education is currently undergoing a process of restructuring and renewal. Industry (both employers and trade unions) has been increasingly involved in off-the-job education and training since the start of the 1980s; such involvement has always been the norm in the apprenticeship system. The ultimate aim is the creation of a system of lifelong learning, to include minimum initial qualifications for everything entering the labour market, responsibility for which is shared between government, industry, the world of vocational education and the community at large.

The reform of upper secondary (post-16) vocational education, which began in 1987, has involved college mergers (creating larger institutions), a focus on regional training provision, greater autonomy for the colleges and closer collaboration between colleges and the communities they serve.

There are currently some thirty national bodies with responsibility for vocational education and training in particular fields (LOBs). Among their most important tasks will be the creation of a single national system of post-16 qualifications encompassing both the apprenticeship system and upper secondary vocational education. Industry has is responsible for formulating learning targets, which are finalized and adopted by the Ministry of Education and Science.

Looking ahead

A government paper on policy and proposed legislation on the future of education and training, published on 29 March 1993, sets out the views of the education and agriculture ministers on the way forward for vocational and adult education. The main purpose of the proposed legislation, scheduled to take effect on 1 January 1996, is the creation of a differentiated but coherent system of vocational and adult education which meets both society's and individuals' needs in these areas. The system must both ensure adequate standards and levels of training and be adequately accessible. Responsiveness to regional developments is seen as vital, above all to ensure that the courses offered meet the needs of the labour market.

The government paper lists seven areas to be covered in the new legislation:

1. Differentiated quality-control arrangements are to be introduced. These will have a major role in maintaining balance in the system, in which educational institutions and other actors will have a large measure of autonomy.

2. A new funding system is to be developed.

3. Municipalities will retain responsibility for adult basic and general secondary education. The relationship between municipalities and the Regional Training Centres (ROCs) will take the form of a contract. Changes are also planned in the relationship between employment services and the ROCs.

4. There will be a need in the future for large multidisciplinary institutions, the Regional Training Centres. More such Centres are to be established.

5. The position of the national bodies with responsibility for vocational education and training (LOBs) is to be strengthened. There are to be changes in their composition and their number is to be reduced.

6. Consultations will be held with the private training institutions on ways of incorporating the system of recognition and approval into the new structure of qualifications.

7. A number of initiatives are currently under way in the area of the dualization of training. This is to continue.

Initial vocational training: Netherlands

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	–	–	–
Planning of vocational training	MBO: Ministry of Education and Science LLW: Ministry and Social Partners	Advice is given by the provincial authorities.	Local authorities offer a minimum level of training.
Defining vocational training programmes	MBO: Ministry of Education and Science LLW: Ministry and Social Partners	MBO college can define or extend the supply of courses	–
Certification	Ministry defines target goals. LOB realizes these goals together with the social partners.	School organizes the examination.	–
Funding	MBO: 100% lump sum (block grant) provided by Ministry. LLW: contract amount per student.	MBO college lump sum (block grant) for personnel and material: extra funding from contract activities.	–
Information on training	Landelijk Diensverlenend Centrum (National Service Centre).	Regional Bureaus of Employment	Local employment service.

Notes
MBO: senior (post-16) secondary vocational education.
LLW: apprenticeship system.
LOB: national bodies with responsibility for vocational education and training.

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Organisation of the vocational education and training system in Portugal and its regional context

The Ministry of Education is the government department responsible for drawing up national education policy designed to promote the development and modernisation of the Portuguese educational system. It has offices at central and regional level and teaching establishments at different levels in accordance with the structure of the educational system.

Decree Law No. 139 of 26 April 1993 lays down the structure and functions of the Department of Secondary Education which is responsible for designing, directing and coordinating matters concerned with secondary education and designating technological, arts and vocational subjects to be taught. The tasks of this department are carried out by five coordinating units, one for each of the five regions of the country. The new system of secondary education, which is being generally implemented in the 1993/94 school year, includes general courses, technological courses and courses given by government-funded vocational training schools.

The Ministry of Employment and Social Security is the government department responsible for defining and implementing policies concerned with employment and vocational training, work and social security. Matters of employment and vocational training are dealt with by the Directorate General for Employment and Vocational Training and its subsidiary body, the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, and at regional level by the latter's regional delegations.

The Directorate General for Employment and Vocational Training is responsible for designing courses and providing technical support and assistance in standardisation in the sphere of employment and vocational training.

The Institute of Employment and Vocational Training, through its central and regional bodies - the Consultative Committees - implements measures of employment and vocational training policy, particularly those deriving from the management of programmes included in the Community Assistance Plan and the new system of certification of vocational qualifications.

To assist and develop the activities of the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training in the vocational training field the Central Department for Vocational Training designs and publicises training models, methodologies, programmes and the like designed to enhance the potential and make full use of the skills of human resources in the context of an evolving production system, technology and labour market.

At apprenticeship level the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training is also responsible for the National Apprenticeship Commission. This has a tripartite composition with representatives from the various ministries.

The Interministerial Commission for Employment has been working alongside the Ministry for Employment and Social Security since 1980 on proposals aimed at devising a global policy for employment and the coordination of activities in the vocational training field at every level.

With a view to intensifying the close cooperation between vocational training within the educational system and vocational training given in the context of employment, there was created on 5 May 1992 a Permanent Monitoring Group coordinated by two representatives of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Employment and Social Security.

On the other hand, when Decree Law No. 95 of 23 May 1992 created the legal regime for certification of vocational qualifications for training given in the context of employment or work experience, a Standing Committee on Vocational Qualifications was set up alongside the board of management of the Institute for Employment and Vocational Training. This Committee is composed of eight representatives of government authorities and eight representatives of the union and employers' confederations represented on the board and is responsible for the functioning of the specialist technical committees covering the various occupations or trades.

This law assures a link with the Interministerial Committee for Employment and the Directorate General for Employment and Vocational Training and, through the permanent linking of the Ministries of Education and Employment and Social Security, makes for parallelism between training and qualifications obtained through the educational system and training received in the context of employment, as also joint representation on Community bodies.

Initial vocational training: Portugal

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	Directorate General for Employment and Vocational Training Interministerial Commission for Employment Employment and Vocational Training Monitoring Service Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Department of Employment and Vocational Training Department of Education Ministry of Education Autonomous Region of Madeira/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training Autonomous of the Azores/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training	Institute of Employment and Vocational Training/ regional offices Autonomous Regional of Madeira/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training Autonomous Region of the Azores/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training Regional education offices	Employment centres Education centres
Planning of vocational training	Ministry of Employment and Social Security Ministry of Education Directorate General for Secondary Education Institute of Employment and Vocational Training National Apprenticeship Commission Public and private institutions Social partners	Regional offices of Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Consultative Committees of Institute for Employment and Vocational Training Regional education offices Public and private institutions Autonomous Region of Madeira/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training Autonomous Region of the Azores/Regional Directorate for Employment and Vocational Training	Direct management centres/ Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Management centres with government funding/Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Regional vocational training centres of the Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Vocational training schools Education centres
Defining vocational training programmes	Ministry of Employment and Social Security Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Ministry of Education National Apprenticeship Commission Standing Commission on Certification Public and private Institutions Social partners	–	–
Certification	Ministry of Employment and Social Security Ministry of Education Other ministries with competence in matters of vocational training; Social partners	–	–
Funding	Government; Firms	–	–
Information on training	Institute of Employment and Vocational Training Directorate for Information and Vocational Guidance Services Ministry of Education/Information and Public Relations Centre Ministry of Employment and Social Security Youth Institute Social partners	–	–

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Initial Vocational Training and the territorial context

Vocational Training in the UK is managed by the four major government departments - Employment Department, Department of Education, Scottish Office and the Training and Employment Agency in Northern Ireland. These organisations are responsible for deciding upon training policy, introducing new initiatives and programmes and for providing funding for these activities.

The localisation of responsibility for training dates from 1989 when the Secretary of State for Employment started to establish a system of 82 Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) in England and Wales which was completed in 1991. In Scotland the Secretary of State for Scotland set up two new enterprise bodies: Scottish Enterprise and Highlands and Islands Enterprise in April 1991, each with training, enterprise and environmental responsibilities implemented through a network of 22 Local Enterprise Companies (LECs) which were established at the same time. Their budgets for enterprise were derived from the previous Scottish Development Agency. The aim of these TECs and LECs is to involve local industry in the identification of training needs and the organisation of training. Their responsibilities include training programmes for young people entering the labour force and for the adult unemployed which have hitherto been run by the Employment Department.

The Government remit for TECs was: 'A TEC will be an independent company with a commercial contract with the Secretary of State to develop training and enterprise in its area. A TEC will normally take the form of a company limited by guarantee and will be run by a board of directors led by private sector business leaders. It will have a wide remit, a large budget and sufficient executive authority to improve measurably the local skill base and to spur business growth.'

In effect this means that responsibility for much of training, and some vocational education, has now been passed to the TECs and LECs, which can use national funding to meet locally identified priorities, with the management of solutions to local needs being in the hands of (admittedly unelected) local leaders of industry.

There is still a role for centrally based Industrial Training Organisations, although many of them may well never be operationally strong. Their contacts with industry, the professions and occupations will mean that they will be sources of expertise and influence for the TECs and LECs to work with closely.

While training delivery is thus becoming more localised, the examination and qualification assessment of training is becoming more centralist, through the National Council for Vocational Qualifications (NCVQ). The NCVQ was set up in 1986 because qualifications in the UK were a ragbag. NCVQ has in place a spread of qualifications covering 80 % of the workforce. Part of this has been achieved with the co-operation of bodies such as City and Guilds, the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) and the professional bodies, but the NCVQ is also breaking much new ground.

There have been other initiatives brought in by the government in recent years to encourage the local and regional infrastructure to take more control over its own future and development.

"Education and Training for the 21st Century" stated the government's intention to legislate to remove further education and sixth form colleges in England and Wales from local authority control, and to make them autonomous bodies with funding from the

Initial vocational training: United Kingdom

Function	Level		
	National	Regional	Local
Employment and training observatories	Employment Department Department for Education Scottish Office Industry Training Organisations	82 TECs 22 LECs	–
Planning of vocational training	Employment Department Department for Education	82 TECs 22 LECs	Further Education Colleges Training Providers
Defining vocational training programmes	Awarding Bodies e.g. City + Guilds, RSA NCVQ	82 TECs 22 LECs	Further Education Colleges Training Providers
Certification	Employment Department Department for Education	Employment Department Department for Education	–
Funding	Employment Department Department for Education	Local Education Authorities 82 TECs 22 LECs	–
Information on training	Employment Department Department for Education Scottish Office BACIE	82 TECs 22 LECs	Training Access Points

References
NCVQ = National Council for Vocational Qualifications
LEC = Local Enterprise Company
TEC = Training and Enterprise Council

new Further Education Funding Council for England and for Wales. A parallel report "Access and Opportunity" indicated that in Scotland also, the further education colleges would be established as corporate bodies with local identity; their funding would come directly from the Scottish Office. Behind these moves is the government's belief that institutions are likely to be more business-like, and thus more responsive to industrial and commercial needs, if they are not treated as a service under local authority control.

In Northern Ireland the government published a policy document about the future direction of further education entitled " Further Education in Northern Ireland - The Road Ahead". This indicated that, unlike England, Wales and Scotland, further education colleges in Northern Ireland would not be removed from local authority control. However, a review group would be set up to advise the government about the planning and funding of further education.

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